

**Bad Medicine, Egoist Encyclopedia, Relationships, & Dinosaurs**

**A Journal of Desire Armed**

# Anarchy

## ¢@PIT@L\$M?

**Andrew Robinson  
on Recuperation**

**Lawrence Jarach  
on Anarchists in  
Business**

**Aragorn!  
on Capitalism**

#64/Fall-Winter 2007

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Reviews include: AK Press Catalog 2007, The CNT in the Spanish Revolution (Vol 2), Horizontalism: Voices of Popular Power in Argentina, species being and other stories, Terrorism: an introduction

*Toward a society based on mutual aid, voluntary cooperation, & the liberation of desire*



# Capitalism Means Never Having to Say You're Sorry

by Leona Benten

Poke an anarchist whose project involves an exchange of money for goods, and chances are you will have to duck to avoid the stream of sticky, apologetic defensiveness.

"If we don't charge, how do you expect us to provide you with this stuff and still sustain ourselves?"

"What *should* we do?"

"It's classist to think that people can do this for free..."

And so on.

While the apologies and excuses do acknowledge that something contradictory and complicated is happening, the rationales tend to fall back into the same old purity reasoning, not much more engaged than disingenuous complaints about Zerzan's use of a typewriter.

These simplistic responses distract us from the questions that we could get creative with. Once we acknowledge that capitalism is in the air we breathe then we can have more interesting conversations.

Part of the problem is people's desire to make money doing things that they believe in. While we all understand wanting a coherent life in which what we spend most of our time doing leads to what we envision for a better world, there is a strong argument that any exchange allowed by this culture is recuperable. (Volunteers and social workers are both easily integrated into—even more, are crucial components of—capitalism.) So maybe we have to give up on the idea that anarchist projects are compatible with a livable wage. Even though this goes directly against the Marxist thinking that our political validity is based on the kind of work that we do.

Which are the circumstances, projects, and times that we can *best* do for free? What are the limits on what anarchists do for money? What is the appropriate relationship of anarchists to businesses, *especially* businesses that wave the circle-A? What makes an anarchist project different from a nonprofit (nonprofits being notorious for demanding that employees be "true believers" who must dedicate far more hours and energy to the organization than most businesses would, or could, ever ask for)? What counts as *sustainable* for an anarchist project?

One of the reasons for charging money for goods is to play a part that makes sense to new comers. Commercial exchanges are interactions that are comfortable for people in this culture, even more comfortable than the other projects

that are the other common first faces of anarchy (like Critical Mass and Food Not Bombs). And it's exactly the transitional space that commercial anarchist projects inhabit that makes them both thorny for dedicated anarchists, and easier for newbies to deal with.

Part of the issue is the disparate and mutually exclusive definitions of *anarchist*. There are all kinds of projects that

call themselves anarchist and that practice ideas contrary to each other. How about a for-profit publishing business that is worker-owned and -controlled, but that requires people to work overtime and produces only a small percentage of anarchist titles relative to their large percentage of non-anarchist books? Does it make sense to call theirs an anarchist business? What about a business that competes with other anarchist publishing and distribution projects, becomes financially successful through this competition, and is thus a centralizing force in the anarchist book publishing niche? Can this project and its success appropriately be called anarchist? Is there any way to avoid this scenario when projects



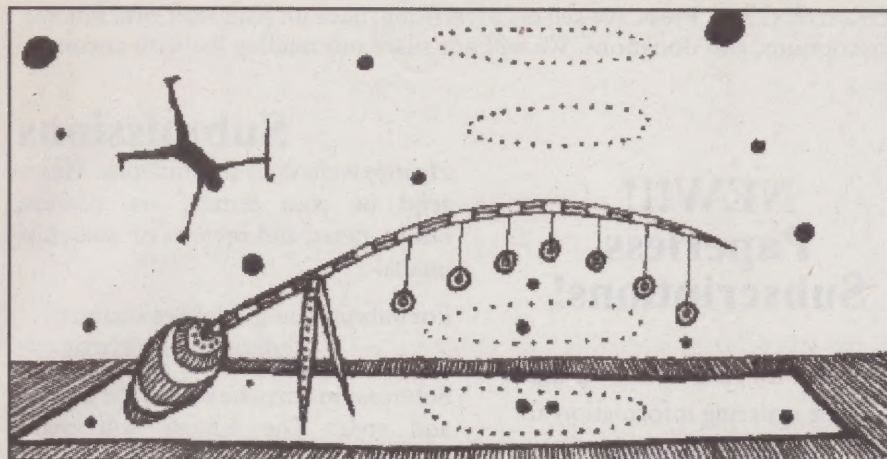
attempt to compete on a large scale (*especially* if they succeed)? How about big, well-known businesses that sponsor events on the same day as other smaller anarchist events, because "it's the only way that the businesses will survive?" What about businesses that call themselves anarchist and hire anarchists, but that seem to denature the people they hire, none of whom engage in anarchist activities or communities once they've quit or been fired from the project?

Some questions to consider for specific projects... Does anyone engaged in it expect to live off the profits? Does the project attempt to compete on a large stage (ie does it use the standard capitalist business model)? How is the project open and transparent? How is it not? Does it encourage and support, or shut down and compete with, other anarchist projects? What else are the people in the project involved in? Does the project have a centralizing tendency, or is it part of networks, and if so, what kinds of networks?

Anarchists are engaged in juggling two incompatible concepts: one is a fundamental opposition to the world we live in, and the other is the need to actually live in, and we hope have an impact on, this world. We all have to find our own ways, with as much help and critical feedback as we can stand. Sometimes more.



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We are a 501c3 non-profit corporation, and all your contributions are tax deductible!



# Inside Anarchy

Welcome to the newest issue of *AJODA*—a particularly rich one—with essays exploring how anarchists deal with capitalism and proposing alternatives.

This was a particularly difficult issue to pull together, since anarchists tend to treat capitalism as the elephant in the middle of the room: it structures our world, but we don't like to talk about it. When we do talk about it, it is generally either in polemics that don't actually help us negotiate the world we live in (any differently than we would without all the rhetoric), or following a Marxist line (with all the limitations therein). So we are particularly proud to be able to offer the provocative pieces that we have collected here, from Andy Robinson's thoughts and questions on recuperation, to Lawrence's piece on anarchists succumbing to capitalist logic, to Aragorn's essay on recalibrating our hostility to capitalism. Bob Black joins in with a review of AK Press's annual catalog, and of AK in general—their theory, their practices, and their history. AK is iconic as the most well-known business to raise the black flag, and is therefore a useful example of how contradictory these issues are—issues that we all cope with every day, to greater and lesser degrees.

We hope that these articles are the beginning of a renewed anarchist critique of capitalism, one that doesn't rest so heavily on either economic determinism or on rigid stances that break as soon as some strong winds blow. There is a lot to learn, and a lot of conversations to have about all of the different ways that capitalism might be overthrown, undermined, bypassed, or various combinations of all of the above. Also in this issue are our regular review sections of books and zines; the continually

lively letters section; more excellent comics from [qwantz.com](http://qwantz.com); columns on health, relationships, anarchist embarrassments (in a different format); and the first official entry in the *Egoist Encyclopedia* by Wolfi Landstreicher.

Due to the continuing failure of alternative publications (*Alternative Press Review* being a notable addition to this list) and the concomitant restructuring and/or folding of many of the businesses that have existed to support alternative presses, we are able to consider a different direction for the format of this magazine. We remain committed to print, but there is a lot of leeway within that commitment, from going back to the tabloid format that *AJODA* had originally, to retaining the glossy cover (presumably-more-attractive-to-newcomers, and necessary for newsstand sales) format that we have now, to the same size but newsprint cover that *Green Anarchy* has sported for some years, to a bigger, glue-bound journal-type format like that of the lamentably now-defunct *Punk Planet*. These kinds of questions are complicated by questions of who our audience is, who we think it should be, what our money resources are,



Emma

whether we want to (and can) focus on subscriptions rather than newsstand sales, and how much anyone is really buying hardcopy anymore anyway. But we know that our readership tends toward the smart and experienced, and we're interested in your take on what our direction might be. To give your input, you can either send a letter or postcard to our post office box, or go online to the [www.anarchymag.org](http://www.anarchymag.org) website, where there will be a thread and a poll for this topic.

As always, consider submitting your writing, thanks for reading, get a subscription! And we look forward to hearing from you.



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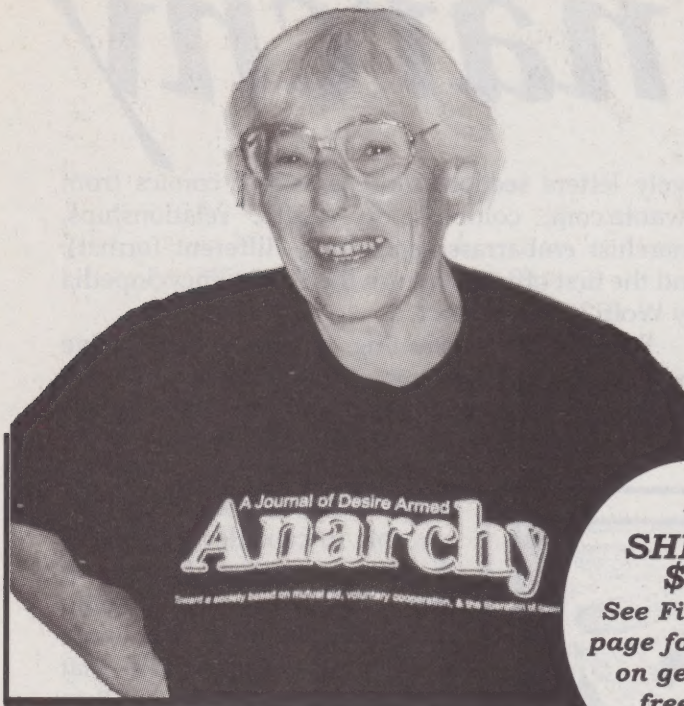
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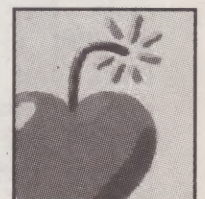
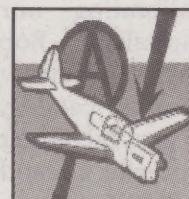
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# On Solidarity: A Lesson From Greece

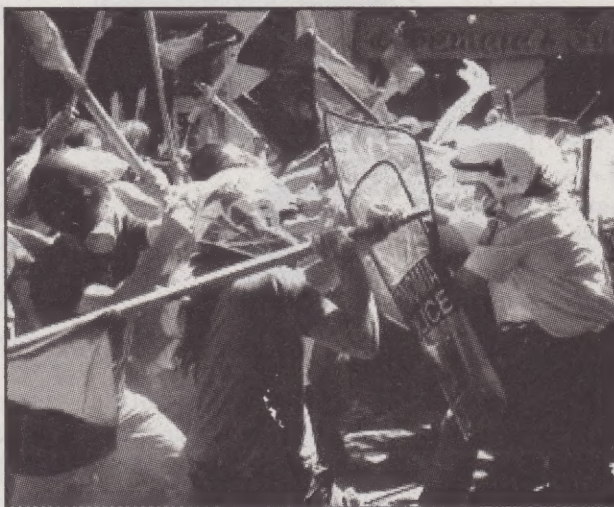
By Aragorn!

Greek anarchists practice solidarity to an extent unparalleled in North America. News from Greece always focuses on the acts of destruction (which they call "violence"—unlike anarchists in the us) without providing much in the way of context for the reader to understand exactly what is going on. While attacks on police stations and banks don't need any justification there is a story to be told that explains most of the events in Greece. Usually it is a story of solidarity and solidarity actions.

Here is a recent one: On April 23, 2007, riots started in the prisons of Malandrino in response to the brutal beating of anarchist prisoner Yiannis Dimitrakis (who robbed a bank in 2005). These riots spread to the Patras and Korydallos prisons. Protests took place in the prisons of Trikala, Larissa, Nafplio, Kerkira, and Komotini. Events happened throughout the prisons for five days.

On April 24th, in Thessaloniki, a 120-strong motorcycle demo reached the Diavata Prison, around eight kilometres outside the city of Thessaloniki. The demonstrators and the prisoners chanted slogans; the prisoners threw burning

blankets out of the building. The police station in the Exarchia district of Athens was attacked on the 26th in solidarity with the uprising. People attacked and burned the building's guardhouse and at least seven police cars, as well as a few motorbikes. Earlier in the day another group had thrown molotov cocktails against the headquarters of the riot police in Zografou (Athens). On the 29th a 200-strong anarchist march took place outside the Malandrino prison. The anar-



chists chanted slogans in support of the recent uprising by rioting prisoners and achieved phone communication with those inside.

It is likely that this level of militance will never be paralleled in North America, but the story of hundreds, if not thousands, of anarchists and friends coming out in solidari-

ty for a bank robbing anarchist who was beaten by prison guards (15 months after being shot three times by the arresting officers) is worth telling. What is the difference between Greece and the us? What will it take for anarchists in North America to exhibit even 10% of the solidarity that the Greeks do?

Details gratefully taken from the 325 collective website.

On the afternoon of 16/1/06 an armed robbery took place at the National Bank of Greece in the centre of Athens. After an exchange of fire with two cops from a special unit, one of the participants, Yannis Dimitrakis, was seriously injured when shot by the cops three times in several parts of his body. The other four participants managed to get away from the scene with about 50,000 euros, with one of them being slightly injured too. Yannis, who openly admitted that he is an anarchist, stayed in different hospitals for a few months till he recovered, then

he was sent to the Korydallos prison of Athens. In another parody of the Greek justice system Yannis was charged with seven robberies! Also he was charged with numerous counts of attempted murder, topped with the anti-terror law! It's not the first time that a trumped-up charge is given towards anarchists in Greece.



This is the letter he sent from prison on the 23rd of June where he explains a lot about what happened in the meantime and his personal position on the robbery.

Comrades,

This letter is my first attempt to communicate and comment on the events that took place and I experienced due to my participation in the bank robbery of the National Bank of Greece that took place in the centre of Athens on January 16th. Before I go on to enlarge upon the actual events, I'd like to say a few things in regards to my motives that lay behind my choice in taking such action and what it means to me.

For me, present-day society is a wagon following a pre-defined course that leads straight towards its complete dehumanization. The role of its passengers, its wheels and its horses—in other words of its driving force—is played out by ourselves, the people. The wagon's driver has the cruel face of capitalism and its co-driver is a faceless and vague state. The path the wagon follows is of course not strewn with rose petals and flowers but with blood and human bodies. With individuals or groups of people that wanted to either resist and change its frantic course or to stand as an obstacle in front of it. The list of those is long: insubordinates, rebels, leftists, anti-authoritarians and anarchists fill many bloody pages in this journey's storybook. Somewhere between the last two groups is where I place myself.

So, to the degree of consciousness that my world-view and perception offers me, what I can easily discern is that present-day society relies only on violence, oppression and ex-

ploitation. A society which aims at the loss of human dignity in every way, by all means. This is something that is experienced and received by each and every one of us in their everyday life, either by being forced to deal with state institutions either at our workplace and from those who manage and profit from our work. Employment, work: words whose true meaning is wage slavery, enslavement. Work and its surplus value are the pillars of today's economic system while the individuals who carry it through and the circumstances under which this takes place confirms that people are treated as expendable goods, as modern slaves. We see workers rotting



away from illnesses that are due to their long-term exposure to hazardous substances, who die either by fall or by explosion in the capitalist temples they are building, losing their urge, their liveliness, their spontaneity—all that characterizes a would-be free person. Working exhausting hours and employed in two or three jobs simultaneously just for a few crumbs. When, to cover their most basic needs, a person is obliged to mortgage to those cold-hearted oppressors that are otherwise known as banks, and,

under the burden of this financial responsibility, start showing signs of subservience and submission; whereas in the case that they cannot in the end cope and are led to bankruptcy and in the end commit suicide or are publicly ridiculed by the mass media as one more human wreckage, leads us to one conclusion.

The state and capital, in order to continue existing, manufacture modern-day helots who can easily be compared to the Spartan ones. A system which, at the altar of profit, sacrifices human lives inconsiderably and with audacity. As I've already mentioned, one of the main partners in this crime are banks which are nothing less than legitimate loan-sharks and are partly to blame for the plundering that's taking place at the expense of peoples' work.

Taking all the above into consideration we can understand Mack in Brecht's "Three Penny Opera," when he asks 'what is a bank robbery compared to the establishment of a bank?' But also taking into consideration me wanting to resist on a personal level—as on a mass level all that know me personally know that I have participated as much as I could—to my future yoke; to determine myself the conditions and quality of my life; to put in to practice my refusal to work and also to play the role of yet another productive unit, of yet another wheel on the wagon; wanting to attack the monstrosity that is called a bank (however at the same time having no illusions that I'll inflict any major blows to this economic institution); choosing to mark a course of dignity in my life, I decided to rob a bank. An act which I consider, amongst many others, as revolutionary and which deservingly claims its



own place as such.

In all honesty I must admit that the money I was going to acquire through the robbery was going to have me as the end-recipient. At the same time, however, as an anarchist and as a person who wishes to show their solidarity through deeds, I'd be one of the first to actively and with joy help in contributing to monetary needs, which might come up in this scene to which I belong. Finally, what I'd like to point out here is that all which I have mentioned up to now does not in any way mean that I support a notion that whoever is an anarchist should be a bank robber or that whoever works is enslaved.

Going on now to recount the chain of events that took place, I take as a starting point the scene where I'm lying on the ground seriously injured by the cops' fire and I have to let myself be taken into the states' 'warm' embrace. The welcoming is to, say the least, impressive as an image, as most people saw, but also exemplary towards anyone who is considering acting in a similar way: A pack of hunters in blue uniforms and me in the role of the injured game being surrounded and receiving 'friendly' kicks—which later I found out where part of the framework to disarm me—and comments like 'we fucked you' or 'you're not such a big shot now, you fucker?!' amongst other brave words. Finally, being handcuffed from behind despite the fact that I couldn't move or breathe, having received bullets in my lungs, liver and elbow, completes the picture. I refer to these events without the slightest trace of bitterness, complaint or disappointment, as I didn't expect any better treatment from

my enemies in the case that I did fall into their hands. [...]

For the time that I was kept at Athens General Hospital I literally experienced the violation of every human right as an arrestee and later as a prisoner. [...] I realized that a guard was now permanently positioned inside the room and right next to me. This situation really irritated me and didn't allow me to rest and I made it known to him. Strangely enough he then left the room and instead stood right in front of it. Of course when the doctors and the head of the ICU came to examine me I reported this incident; truly astounded and irritated by the event, they got rid of the cop, wondering who had let him in.

Here, a big thank you needs to be given from my behalf to all those people, from the doctors to



the nurses, who paid me attention and who, regardless of their own political beliefs, took care of me as best as they could. [...]

On the third or fourth day of my hospital treatment I was informed that prosecutor Diotis was coming to see me later that afternoon. I must confess that to start with I wasn't sure whether in my condition I would be up to facing him. The head of the ICU, however, assured me that he would be by my side for the duration of the interrogation and made it known to me that, due to my condition, I had a right

to stop the process at whatever moment, something that I had been unaware of. So when Diotis arrived, escorted by a security police chief and another person whose official role I can't remember (probably the interrogator) and as soon as each of them had spoken to me for a couple of minutes, I signaled to my doctor that I wanted them to leave. On his way out Diotis told me that in any case they were going to find who else was with me and that to talk now would just make it easier for me. Of course his words fell on deaf ears. The second time he came I was given a chance to understand who Diotis really is when, in a lively exchange of words with the head of the ICU, a very strange phrase slipped out of his mouth. Having finished his monologue and having delivered the arrest warrant and the list of accusations I was facing, he asks me to sign. My doctor immediately intervenes and explains to him that I am incapable of doing such a thing at the moment and asks him to leave, as my strength was deserting me. Then Diotis, to both our surprise, answers: 'Of

course I respect the boy's condition and I don't intend to give him a hard time, because if I did I could just pull on his tubes a little and put his pressure up to 50.' I realized at that moment what would have happened in that room if the doctors weren't people with willpower and values but simply pawns. I would, no doubt, have discovered the 'famous' interrogation methods that prosecutor Diotis has used in the past.

After this incident the conditions of my detention really

Continued Page 11



# WHAT IF YOU THREW A *DÉRIVE* AND NO ONE CARED?

By Anonymous

For a number of years the high point of the calendar year for anarchists in the Bay Area has been the anarchist bookfair organized by Bound Together Books. Every spring at the San Francisco Hall of Flowers in Golden Gate Park for 12 years, this one-day event has been the place to be to run into old friends, lovers, and rivals. Anarchists and their friends from all over the West Coast come into the area for the weekend and a good time is had by all.

Almost from the beginning a group of San Francisco anarchists organized an anarchist cafe for the night before the bookfair in the City. Five years after the bookfair began, a group of anarchists associated with a local weekly anarchist study group organized a day of workshops on anarchist theory. The BASTARD (Berkeley Anarchist Students of Theory And Research & Development) conference may have the most tortured acronym ever but the event has brought together an amazing collection of workshops and presenters from every corner of North American anarchism. Finally, the past few years there has been an increasing

number of events around the time of the bookfair, mostly organized under the rubric of "8 Days of Anarchy" (the past two years has included eight days of events).



This year the events for 8 Days of Anarchy included a day of training with anarchist Mixed Martial Artist and submission wrestler Jeff Monson, two events at the weekly Long Haul anarchist study group, the BASTARD conference, a benefit concert for *Anarchy*, a showing of a Sacco & Vanzetti documentary and another film, a night of board gaming, a second smaller all-day conference on the topic of inspiration, and a 24-hour *dérive* held in San Francisco.

This year's events were well attended but less so than the year before, with the exceptions of the *dérive* and the seminar with Jeff Monson. Unfortunately, after a great deal of back and forth, Jeff was not able to make it to the Bay Area. He had a fight in Japan scheduled just a week or two after the 8 Days of Anarchy and had just won a submission grappling tournament in the UK the week before, but to his first event in the Bay (the day before the seminar) he was a no show. He ended up not showing for the whole weekend (he was scheduled to speak at the BASTARD conference as well as the seminar), which was disappointing to many people.

The amount of planning that had gone into the 24-hour *dérive* was ridiculous. After the 2006 8 Days of Anarchy some comrades had planted the seed that the idea of spending a day in San Francisco wandering about, stopping in pubs, and generally making a day of it would be a blast. This, of course, was the extent of their contribution to the idea of the *dérive* and in hindsight was about the right amount of time that should have been spent



on the idea. Assuming that many people would not have an idea about the rich history of a *dérive*, nor would be interested in walking just aimlessly around San Francisco, a series of different ways to experience the day was put together into a packet. This included putting together a radical history tour (along with a map) of SF, detouring maps of other cities for surrealist takes on SF, and setting up a series of meeting places for people who were going to *dérive* to meet throughout the day (on the assumption that very few people were actually going to *dérive* for 24 hours but would want to hook up with other people). This ended up being the strength and weakness of the event. It was great to hang out with people at pubs and cafes throughout the city, but was a drag for the under-21 set, and ended up framing the event far too much. After sitting at the 3 pm location for two hours everyone got up and started heading to the 6 pm meeting spot. The Situationists roll in their graves at the American work ethic. The packet wasn't nearly slick or well-enough advertised for people to take advantage of it (the skills of the organizers being in putting the event together rather than in marketing it) plus was put together too late in the process.

The rest of the events, including the movies, gaming, and discussions, were well attended and engag-

ing—engaging enough to allow one to forget for just a few days the general decline in anarchist activity in North America, enough to allow one to forget that anarchist people from all over the West Coast (and country) can only find the motivation to get together under the banner of an anarchist swap meet. 8 Days of Anarchy may not happen every year but the idea that we can find more ways to spend time together than outside the equivalent to an anarchist shopping mall (with speakers) continues to be inspiring enough to try again.

<http://8daysofanarchy.org>

Thanks are in order: Suigetsukan, Shaping SF, 924 Gilman, Station 40, The Long Haul, the BASTARD conference, the Compound, Naked Aggression, Resistant Culture, Disaster Strikes, Mouth Sewn Shut, Surrender, xYosefx, Amelia, Greg, Barry, and Javier.



### Solidarity Continued...

worsened. [...]

I believe the sole purpose of all this was to humiliate me, to make me lose all sense of self-respect and to generally make me realize the fact that I was a captive in their hands and I no longer had any rights. These situations drove me to think of the hospital and prisons at Korydallos as a haven of mental tranquility.

In the meantime, while I was waiting to be transferred to Korydallos prison, we all saw an orchestrated attempt by the prosecuting authorities to manufacture culprits with their only indication being that they belonged to my friendly environment or to the anarchist scene. I am now sure that the taking in of people to be interrogated, making public their names and the issuing of arrest warrants were triggered by the police finding some of my personal photos, calls to and from my mobile or whatever document proved I had a friendly relationship with these individuals. I want to express my solidarity to all of them. [...]

Finally I have one thing to say about all those who are planning our physical, ethical and political annihilation, once and for all: no matter what dirty and unethical means they use, no matter how much they hunt us down and imprison us they will never crush us and tame us. Because those who are just are those who revolt not those who snitch and bow their heads.

In struggle

Giannis Dimitrakis  
Korydallos Prisons  
5 June 2006

Details on how to contact Giannis can be found on our website.



# GREEN SCARE UPDATE

By Andy Fleming

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Jeff Luers, Darren Thurston, Briana Waters, Chelsea Gerlach, Daniel McGowan, Eric McDavid, Rod Coronado and Zach Jensen. Over the course of the last year or so, many of these folks have been sentenced for eco-terrorism, the trials of others are ongoing, and, while some have defied the us state, others have collaborated with prosecutors and turned against their erstwhile comrades. The term "Green Scare" refers to a recent series of us government prosecutions of environmental activists, and is intended to evoke memories of previous Government witch-hunts against anarchist and left-wing political activists in the 1910s and 1950s — the "Red Scares."

Most of the above-named individuals — Darren, Briana, Chelsea, and Daniel — were prosecuted as a result of Operation Backfire: "the name given by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to the ten year old investigation and indictment of fifteen individuals accused of several arsons in the Pacific Northwest between 1996 and 2001 claimed by the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) or the Animal Liberation Front (ALF)"; the FBI announcing the first indictments of 11 people for "domestic terrorism" in January 2006.

Eric and Zach, on the other hand, were two of three people (the other being Lauren Weiner) "arrested on January 13, 2006... and... accused of 'conspiring to damage or destroy by explosive or fire' cell phone towers, power plants and US Forest Service facilities." Zach and Lauren have both since agreed to testify against Eric,



Animal rights activist in California being arrested

whose trial is ongoing.

Finally, Rod Coronado—like the subjects of Operation Backfire and the Sacramento Three, another victim of the Green Scare—goes to trial this September for a speech he gave in San Diego in 2003.

This, in extremely brief detail, is the story of the Green Scare, and that of ten or so of the approximately 28 individuals targeted by the us state for alleged crimes committed in the name of saving animals, plants, and their habitats from destruction. And irrespective

of the truth of the allegations, or their tactical advisability, what's interesting about this latest wave of repression in the us is that it is being done in the name of fighting terrorism. Further, this fight not only involves the expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars by state agencies such as the FBI, but takes advantage of the raft of highly repressive anti-terrorist legislation enacted in the US since 9/11, both in terms of using highly questionable, and previously unlawful, information-gathering techniques (including the use of government agents and paid informants), but also in terms of the spectre of massively-increased punishments, especially by way of sentencing guidelines augmented by "terrorism enhancement" (TE).

In January 2006, the FBI revealed that it is and has been investigating the anarchist movement [sic] and disclosed that a paid informant—medic "Anna"—had been embedded within a group of activists. This sort of politically motivated investigation is old news (COINTELPRO, anyone?), but is both increasing and increasingly open, as a result of more power and leeway being given to agencies like Homeland Security.

Agent Walker's affidavit is further revealing of



the FBI's backslide into politically motivated investigations. It references "anarchist" or "anarchism" 26 times in its mere 14 pages. In it, the FBI seems obsessed with the anarchist "lifestyle," anarchist literature, and anarchist gatherings. These invocations of dread anarchism add nothing more to the scales of probable cause than if all the terms were replaced by the word "Christian", and no one can gainsay that Christians have committed more atrocities in history than anarchists. It is elemental that a person is not guilty by association to an unpopular (or popular) cause in this country. But as a PR move—in seeking more constitutionally suspect laws, higher bails, more warrants, longer sentences, and a bigger chilling effect on progressive activists—the government's projection of a giant anarchist menace is highly effective... ~ "War on the First Amendment: The Great Green Scare and the Fed's 'Case' Against Rod Coronado" Ben Rosenfeld, Counterpunch, March 10, 2006

A great deal more information regarding Operation Backfire and the Green Scare in general may be found via [GreenScare.org](http://GreenScare.org), journalist Will Potter's [GreenIsTheNewRed.com](http://GreenIsTheNewRed.com), the Civil Liberties Defence Center in Eugene, Oregon and the [FBIwitchhunt.com](http://FBIwitchhunt.com) site. At present, the state-of-play for the 15 individuals charged as a result of Government repres-

sion as embodied in Operation Backfire may be summarised as follows:

- Cooperating Defendant Stanislas Meyerhoff—13 years (+TE)
- Cooperating Defendant Kevin Tubbs—12 years 7 months (+TE)
- Cooperating Defendant Chelsea Gerlach—9 years (+TE)
- Cooperating Defendant Kendall Tankersley [a/k/a Sarah Kendall Harvey]—3 years 10 months
- Cooperating Defendant

months (+TE)

Lacey Phillabaum and Jennifer Kolar have also been indicted and pled guilty after turning police informant in both the Oregon and Washington cases. They have not been sentenced yet and will most likely be sentenced in Washington after Brianna Waters' trial. The first informant, Jacob Ferguson—a self-professed serial arsonist and longtime heroin addict—is as yet unindicted, and according



Suzanne Savoie—4 years 3 months (+TE)

- Cooperating Defendant Darren Thurston—3 years 1 month
- Non-Cooperating Defendant Daniel McGowan—7 years (+TE)
- Non-Cooperating Defendant Jonathan Paul—Sentencing in abeyance
- Non-Cooperating Defendant Joyanna Zacher—7 years 8 months (+TE)
- Non-Cooperating Defendant Nathan Block—7 years 8

to his own admission has been granted immunity and has been paid at least \$50,000 for his cooperation from federal prosecutors despite playing an aggravating role in nearly every indicted arson.

In addition to the years long sentences with Terrorism Enhancements, there has also been one casualty of "Operation Backfire." Bill Rodgers of Prescott, Arizona, was found dead in his cell, an apparent suicide, two weeks after his arrest.



# Defusing Some Confusion

Reviewed by Lawrence Jarach

## **Terrorism: An Introduction**

by Jonathan R. White  
(Wadsworth/Thomas Learning 2002)  
326 pages. Paper. \$43.95

Every so often it's a good idea—as well as an amusing exercise—to read material originating from the class enemy; aspects of this particular introductory text are alternately cringe-worthy and hilarious. Written before the attacks of 9/11, *Terrorism: An Introduction* is used as a standard textbook for courses in criminology and criminal justice (indeed, it is part of the series called “The Wadsworth Contemporary Issues in Crime and Justice Series”; other notable titles include *Sense and Nonsense About Crime and Drugs*; *Crime and the American Dream*; and *Renegade Kids, Suburban Outlaws: From Youth Culture to Delinquency*). White wrote it specifically for a law enforcement and military readership, and the simple language is quite telling; this is no dry, hyper-academic, university text. The tone and explanations are obviously geared for the level of high school or community college students as well as cops and soldiers—definitely not too intellectual.

Big Words and Concepts are used and then explained—but not always well. Among the most notable examples are the following: *pejorative* is defined as “emotionally charged” (4), regardless of the usual definition of tending toward disparagement and negativity.

*Cadre* is defined as “a military term; these are the same people most of us call ‘terrorists’” (35), which is not actually a definition at all. The common definition is more generic: a specially trained group. *Fedayeen* are defined as “holy warriors” (41), which is totally incorrect; it really means those who sacrifice themselves, especially in armed conflict with the State of Israel (*mujahedin*, those who fight a *jihad*, are holy warriors). *Capitalists* are defined as “the economic owners of industry” (67), which is far too complex to get into here. Other terms are just wrong, like the idiosyncratically spelled “Q’ran” (pages 93, 95, 160, and 169) and the incorrectly named Red Cells (177). There are two standard ways of referring to the Muslim holy book (Koran or Qur’an), and the name of the German group was Revolutionary Cells (*Revolutionäre Zellen*); an explicitly feminist spin-off was called Red Zora (Rota Zora). Both groups had the initials RZ, which probably accounts for White’s error (although he’s not the only one to make it).

Among the other quibbles that appear in the book is the list of terrorist outfits in the appendix. One of those listed is “Angry Brigade—A British animal rights group operating between 1968 and 1971” (285). I imagine the people who were arrested and accused of being members of the Angry Brigade would find it alternately amusing and absurd to

have their target choices (not a vivisection or factory farm among them) so described.

Probably the most unintentionally funny quote refers to the infamous Battle of Seattle:

In November 1999, Seattle, Washington, virtually came to a standstill, as several anarchists, left-wing extremists, labor activists, environmentalists, and unemployed people demonstrated and eventually rioted. (185)

Several?! How could “several” people or groups bring a major metropolitan area “to a standstill”? The possibility that, by declaring a State of Emergency and clamping down on any and all unauthorized gathering or movement of people, it was the cops who brought the city to a standstill escapes White’s imagination. Cops are the ones who have the ability to close off large areas of urban landscapes, not “several anarchists” etc. Perhaps he left out the word thousand after “several”; perhaps his editors deleted it. Either way, it’s too hilarious not to point out.

Despite such simple mistakes, White does have a few interesting things to say. No skill for a political party, he’s not trying to score any PR points with his analysis. His attempt to define and contextualize terrorism is far more honest than that of most mainstream commentators:



Sometimes it seems as though the event itself defines terrorism. For example, when a plane is destroyed by a bomb, it is frequently called terrorism, but when military forces shoot down a civilian aircraft, it can be deemed an unfortunate mistake... Dual standards and contradictions lead to confusion any time the term terrorism is employed. (4)

Any discussion of terrorism would be incomplete without at least one chapter on the role of the corporate media. White has some important admissions to make:

Within the ranks of everyday police or military operations, it is not uncommon to hear many statements criticizing the media... Reporters, newspapers, and television news teams are generally not trusted... American media is not driven by truth; it is driven by market domination. This leads to sensationalistic reporting. (257)

Yet it's equally clear that he's no friend of ours. Aside from his implicit support for his intended readership of cops and military officers, his perspective rejects any possibility for a culture based on cooperation and friendly, non-lethal competition. A committed authoritarian, White writes:

Humans live in a constant state of conflict. Indeed, it is impossible to have a human social organization without conflict... social organization is maintained because the controlling group can force people to join the organization and force members to obey the organization's rules. The amount of force is subject to limitation, but the ability to

coerce is real. Therefore, social organizations are never truly "at peace"; they are always "at war." The amount and level of conflict varies, but conflict is normative. (11-12)

Similarly, he cannot conceive of any cultural formation that can have legitimacy outside—let alone against—officialdom or statecraft:

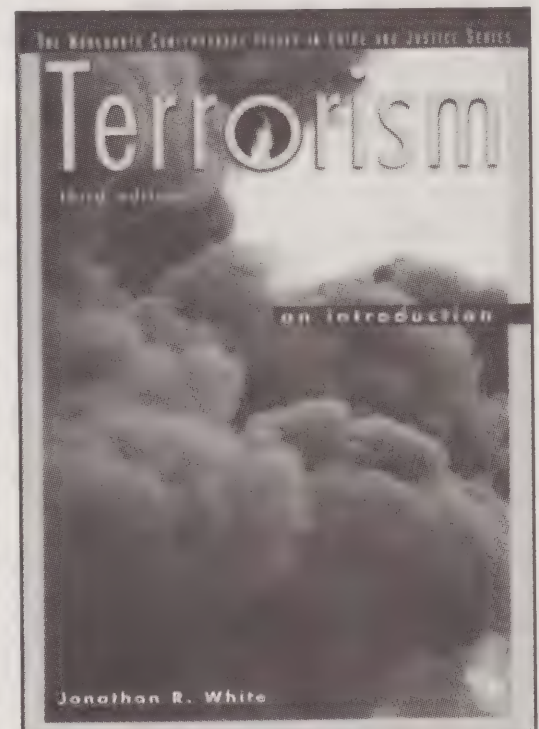
...terrorists must be able to justify their actions, at least to their own satisfaction. Since they have no legitimate social structure such as a nation-state or an official organization, the role of group support and the group's belief system become extremely important to understanding terrorist behavior. (18)

Yet as a good statist, who sympathizes with those being organized by others, he is at pains to promote the neutrality of cops:

Anytime [sic] governmental forces use degrading terms to describe groups or particular styles of behavior, they move toward demonization. This is dangerous. The language and the process of demonization have no place in American law enforcement. (56)

As is the case with most contemporary examinations of terrorism, anarchists and anarchism come in for the usual unfair and biased treatment. For the most part White has a decent understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of anarchism, but he inevitably makes a few familiar mistakes. He refers to the Russian populist Peoples' Will as anarchist, and he also calls Emma Goldman and Peter Kro-

potkin terrorists, despite the lack of evidence linking either of them personally to any violent actions. Added to the anarchist terrorist list is Karl Heinzen, a German who fled to Switzerland after the failed revolutions of 1848 and who eventually ended up in the United States. I had never heard of Heinzen before, and he fails to appear in the indexes of any of the books in my extensive radical library, so I did a quick search for him on the internet. Turns out he was "a radical democrat" and "a true republican," according to various historians. While an advocate of insurrection and murder (along the lines of Babeuf's Conspiracy of Equals), he never



called himself an anarchist, which is probably why I never heard of him. Either White is trying to create a false picture of anarchism by including this proponent of mayhem, or he's being intellectually dishonest, or both.

Further along he writes, "an international organization of anarchists would have been contra-



dictory, as they inherently opposed large organizations" (70). He seems to think that we became extinct with the passing of Emma Goldman, but that still doesn't account for him not knowing about various mass-based—even international—anarchist organizations (like FORA, the CNT, the FAI, the AIT, etc). Anarchists who distrust large organizations have particular criticisms of them, but also acknowledge that they are anarchist.

He tries to saddle anarchists with a dubious distinction: "Terrorism in the modern sense came from violent anarchists in the late 1800s" (71), as if there were no acts of political violence and/or assassination prior to the era of propaganda by the deed. Aside from that, the modern era is usually counted from the time of the French Revolution, when terrorism (both the action and the term) was used for specific political aims: consolidating control of the State through the ideological and physical eradication of the regime's (perceived) enemies. Surely this explicit origin in the 18th century has much more to do with the use of the term in a modern sense than the actions of individuals against particular symbols of state power in the late 19th and early 20th. After foisting the invention of "terrorism in the modern sense" on anarchists, he quickly (on the same page!), and more honestly, acknowledges that there's something else going on.

Ironically, nationalistic trends accompanied anarchist violence... If the 1800s witnessed the growth of anarchism, it

also saw the growth of nationalism. Many nationalists...adopted the tactics of the anarchists... nationalistic terrorists began to follow the pattern set by the violent anarchists. (70)

White clearly understands the fundamental difference between anarchist propaganda by the deed and nationalist tactic of bombings and assassinations to compel a foreign occupier to grant some kind of self-rule, hence the irony he notices. More than that, he states, "Old terrorism was tied to the anarchist ideology... and other than eliciting fear from established governments, [it] was not very effective... new terrorism is quite different, not in its philosophy, but in its effectiveness" (75). This "new terrorism" is that

of nationalists, Stalinists, and fascists, groups using terror as State policy—just as the Jacobins originally did. So if this "new terrorism" is discrete ideologically, tactically, and effectively from "old"—that is, anarchist—terrorism,

it begs the question of why White (and other commentators) continues to pretend that anarchists have anything in common with the practitioners of this "new" kind. A mere three paragraphs later, the single most obvious distinction between these "old" and "new" forms is explained: "Modern terrorists engage in the sensationalized murder of innocents" (75).

With the distinguishing characteristic of modern terrorism being "the sensationalized murder of innocents," White and other commentators (including—and

especially—the FBI) have the gall to think that critical readers won't notice their inclusion of "ecoterrorists" under the rubric of modern terrorism. Using particularly dishonest and propagandistic language, he writes that "violent groups" of "ecoterrorists" "such as ELF, ALF, advocate and engage in *economic damage*" (my emphasis). The only thing that makes them similar to modern terrorists is that they "try to create an aura of power through publicity" (234). Not the murder of innocents, but having a media presence is what allows White and other cretins to place the ELF and ALF firmly under their "terrorist" umbrella. The implication for other groups and individuals who engage in acts of sabotage and/or vandalism is chilling—similar to the pronouncements from the Genoese Chief of Police who tried to equate the Black Bloc with ETA on the day the Carabinieri murdered Carlo Giuliani. It's the typical cop fantasy of believing any dissident (a criminal in the eyes of the Law) being armed and dangerous; it reinforces their policy of shooting first and asking questions later.

I get the sense from reading this book that any law enforcement personnel who use it as their basic text for attempting to understand "domestic terrorism" will inevitably equate any and all current (and future) disruptive anarchist and/or insurrectionary activity with terrorism—if that association weren't cemented already. I am not overflowing with confidence that the cops will not demonize or dehumanize us and our allies, no matter how inappropriate White might find it.

Any discussion of terrorism would be incomplete without at least one chapter on the role of the corporate media. White acknowledges this.



# *A Fragile Horizontalism*

Reviewed by A. Burkin

## **Horizontalism: Voices of Popular Power in Argentina**

Ed. and translated by

Marina Sitrin

AK Press, 2006

255 pages. Paper. \$18.95

According to critics, anarchism is, at best, an idealistic and impractical theory—something that cannot possibly be put into practice. After all, without social hierarchy, and our long-established institutions, how could society possibly function? In a non-hierarchical society, with no bosses and no one telling us what to do, would anyone *do* anything? Would people work? How would we function? And these questions melt into the Great Confusion that calls anarchy “chaos.”

*Horizontalism* examines the recent social upheaval in Argentina. The interviews in the book challenge the idea that anarchism is impractical and impossible, and show that people are perfectly capable of working and functioning within a collapsed society, one in which the institutions we are told we need in order to survive no longer exist. Sitrin presents a concise history of a troubled country while arguing that the social revolution in Argentina, based on collapse and implosion, is a predictable consequence, a synthesis, of the last tumultuous decades of the twentieth century. The ten chapters are a collection of interviews with people involved in various aspects of the social revolution

occurring in Argentina. These comrades in adversity are witnesses to a metamorphosis of traditional societal functions and include various members of collectives, indigenous communities, and neighborhood assemblies. Sitrin states horizontalism or *horizontalidad*

does not just imply a flat plane for organizing, or non-hierarchical relationships in which people no longer make decision for others. It is a positive word that implies the use of direct democracy and striving for consensus, processes in which everyone is heard and new relationships are created. (vi)

A wave of military dictatorships and the subsequent Dirty War characterized the social and political history of Argentina in the last half of the twentieth century. Even after the military Junta resigned in 1983 and a pseudo-democracy was restored, those who hoped to receive justice from the new government saw President Carlos Menem handing out pardons for the murders, tortures, and disappearances that had taken place. On top of this, working class Argentineans continued to suffer economically. The 1990s saw globalization, a period of hyperinflation, soaring unemployment, and approximately half the country living below the



poverty line.

Also in the 1990s, unemployed workers began organizing and “took to the streets by the thousands, blocking major transportation arteries to demand subsidies from the government.” Since these actions were “not led or brokered by elected leaders” this form of organization represented a “decisive break from the past.” Unemployed workers’ movements sprang up spontaneously all over the country, “creating new social relationships,” which “evolved into ... unemployed workers’ movements” (6).

But Sitrin argues it was the “collapse of the Argentine economy and the declassing of much



of the middle class as a result of the coercive policies of the IMF" in 2001 that led to a "second wave of popular rebellion, during which the now declassed Argentine middle class linked up with unemployed and underemployed workers" (p. 5). After the collapse of the banks, the disenfranchised middle classes found themselves stripped of financial security. With savings vanishing overnight, the middle classes found themselves in the same position as working class Argentines—with no prospects for employment, and gaping anxieties about survival.

While it's no shock that Argentina's various governments, dictatorships, and institutions have repeatedly exploited the people, the military junta that ruled from 1976 to 1983 left a particularly bloody stain—an estimated 30,000 victims in the Dirty War's state-sponsored violence against citizens. Although after 1983, the new government was perfectly happy to forget the past and move on, the families of the victims were not. The Dirty War radicalized many Argentines who sought justice, and they formed grassroots organizations that were pivotal in the events that unfolded in 2001. The situation in Argentina reached a climax in December 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 2001 when "millions spontaneously took to the streets across Argentina and without leaders or hierarchies, forced the government to resign" (p. 8). Four more governments fell over the next few weeks. And so horizontalism was spontaneously created and grew as people moved to a system of mutual aid. Neighborhood assemblies sprang up overnight. At first, assemblies existed for

people to simply get together and see what the community needed, but they also served as forums of catharsis as neighbors finally got to know each other and began working together in their shared crisis. As one participant notes, "This was a revolution in every sense. It was a revolution from the viewpoint of, 'I can't take it any-

more,' and without thinking about it, workers together, including us, began to look for a solution." Another interviewee states that the movement is "partly a reclaiming of the old social spaces that had been lost," (28) a remarkably simple and accurate summation.

A great deal of the book is concerned with the reclamation of workplaces. Following the economic collapse, many factories and businesses closed. Workers were left stranded with no jobs and no money. Frequently the bosses disappeared leaving substantial unpaid back wages. Frustrated, and desperate for work, the workers simply occupied their former workplaces, turning abandoned factories, bakeries, and medical clinics into productive concerns once more. And you can probably guess that in many instances, as the businesses became profitable again, the bosses reappeared, demanded the police evict the squatters, and repression reared its ugly head.

The two major threats to horizontalism are the movement's financial dependence on the capitalist system and the lure of political reform. The problem of financing the social revolution re-

mains unanswered, but we must consider two historical examples: anarchist Spain and the Paris Commune of 1871. According to Abraham Guillen in the 1992 pamphlet *Anarchist Economics* (taken from chapters three and five of *Economia Libertaria*, written in 1988) one of the biggest mistakes the CNT made was to leave intact the economic structures—such as banks—so the social revolution remained at the local or regional level and failed to reach the national level. While the land and various services were collectivized, the financial institutions were untouched, and this (according to Guillen), leaves any social revolution vulnerable. Similarly, one of the criticisms of the Paris Commune is that the Communards left France's national bank intact, and the bank's money financed the troops who eventually slaughtered them.

Anarchists know it's irrational to expect the capitalist state to respond cordially if approached and asked for help financing the revolution. And this fundamental problem rears its head with horizontalism. Workers who reclaimed various workplaces discovered that they needed loans in order to function. There's the example of the workers of the Bauern Hotel who lost their jobs after the hotel went bankrupt in 2001. After contacting the National Movement of Recuperated Workplaces (MNER), the workers formed a cooperative, and occupied the building. The collective sought official permission to reopen the hotel, and if legally approved through the courts, they would be allowed to open the hotel for two years (with a possible extension). After this time, the collective has the option to buy the hotel "out of bankruptcy" (81). This, of course,

**The professional politicians, the leadership ... take note and realize they have to redesign institutions to recapture those who are slipping away.**



necessitates a bank loan or a government subsidy, so money and financial institutions are hardly removed from this equation.

Politicians and the lure of reform are the second threat to horizontalism, and it's important to remember that those involved are not all anarchists but represent a wide range of beliefs. Politicians saw these fresh movements as a great hunting ground, and they proceeded to muscle their way in and try to establish the old familiar hierarchies with themselves in cozy positions of authority within the new paradigm. Instances of reformism sneaked into the movement and people and groups were effectively hijacked. Many Argentines, however, felt betrayed by politicians and so were reluctant to believe the next flood of promises. As noted by Ezequiel (a neighborhood assembly member), "the professional politicians, the leadership ... take note and realize they have to redesign institutions to recapture those who are slipping away" (121). Sitrin notes that assemblies have dwindled from the hundreds to dozens. This, she argues is due to "the intrusion of left political parties, a lack of concreteness in activity, and interference from the state" (10).

Just how money fits into the new paradigm remains questionable. One of the chapters explores how bartering was initiated and failed. Tickets were printed "to represent exchange values," (151) but the barter network was effectively ruined with a flood of counterfeit tickets, which led to inflation within the system and its eventual collapse. In an effort to function

without money, some workers quickly learned to trade services, and there are several examples given here, including one instance of a reclaimed medical clinic. The clinic has a trading agreement with a recuperated printing press, and "medical treatment of a dozen people" is exchanged for the printing of various "flyers and brochures." As one interviewed worker sees it, establishing fair "exchange agreements" is a serious problem (p. 101). Furthermore this clinic

context of horizontalism, but after that the author takes a hands-off approach to the material. The entire financing with loans from the banks that fleeced Argentineans in the first place seems problematic at best, but Sitrin doesn't challenge the assumption when workers voice the idea they will be able to get loans. Furthermore, additional research would add a great deal. For example, the book does not include solid statistics on how many workplaces have

been reclaimed, so the reader cannot gauge how widespread the movement is. (The 2004 documentary film "The Take" places the number of those in worker-occupied businesses at around 15,000 and doubling every year since 2001.) Sitrin mentions that in 2001, there were a "dozen or so" occupied factories, and that by 2003, this number grew to hundreds (14), but these numbers seem loose and ill defined. Sitrin's argument regarding the



must pay for medical supplies, so an exchange system—no matter how equitable—isn't going to pay the bills.

Since the movement is non-hierarchical, it's appropriate that the voices of those involved in horizontalism should represent most of the text. As one *companero* points out "we don't need others speaking for us or about us," (149) but this works both for and against the book. Many of the interviews seem shapeless and repetitive while others offer remarkable analysis and clarity of vision. There were points at which substantive analysis would not have been amiss. Sitrin's introduction provides the background

magnitude of horizontalism would be considerably strengthened with the addition of some good old-fashioned facts and figures. To Sitrin's credit, she addresses the criticism that "some of the narratives may seem redundant" (17) and states the book is not an analysis of social movements in Argentina. As it stands, the book offers exactly what the title promises, but a reliance on the voices alone without further research and analysis weakens it.



# REVOLT & OTHER MYSTERIES

species being and other stories

by Frère Dupont

(Ardent Press, 2007)

158 pages. Paper. \$12

Reviewed by Australopithecus afarensis

Frère Dupont, of the Monsieur Dupont group, has staked out a position of "nihilist communism" somewhere between or beyond anarchist and left-Marxist communism, and currently engages the anti-politics milieu. Like many before him, he has grown weary of the institutions and graylife activism of the left. This book is intriguing although problematic. Much of what he's got to say is incisive, but some of it also seems kind of muddy—a consequence of relying overmuch on the concept of "species-being," a "largely untheorised term" associated with the humanism of young Marx, but which Brother Dupont does not excavate fully. The question we're interested in is, what is the case for an anarchist appropriation of the concept of

As his contribution to a new theorization of species-being, Dupont describes revolt as the human essence.

species-being? Is that a desirable course, or is it even possible? Dupont obviously believes the term holds an important meaning, since it supplies the title of the piece, yet he deploys it in a manner "encrusted with qualification." He does not place species-being in its original context in the milieu of the so-called Young Hegelians, which may have helped readers grasp it more firmly with their prehensile tails.

Species-being (*Gattungswesen*

in German) makes its main appearance in Marx's *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* and in certain other texts from that time (eg, *On the Jewish Question* and *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*), but was subsequently orphaned as he became immersed in the critical analysis of political economy and the elaboration of "scientific socialism." Marx however did not invent this term but borrowed it from Ludwig Feuerbach, an erstwhile theology student and author of *The Essence of Christianity*. For Feuerbach it signified love as the human essence (ie, the Christian concept of God-as-love transferred onto humanity in the abstract). For the band of Berlin drinking buddies known as "The Free,"

Feuerbach's philosophical anthropology was a milestone in moving beyond Hegel. But for some it wasn't radical enough. Feuerbach drew criticism from two directions — first from Max Stirner, then from Marx. For Marx, Feuerbach's species-being remains a Hegelian ideal whose alienation takes place only in consciousness rather than through the economic/historical conditions imposed on material life. Stirner's *The Ego and Its Own* was a searing psychological critique of humanism, liberalism, and socialism/communism, represented at that time chiefly by figures such as Feuerbach and

Weitling. Marx, who had not yet made a name for himself, had been Feuerbach's disciple up to this point. Stirner criticized Man and the Species as new "spooks" that inherit the place of God as overlords of the real living individual. The egoist critique produced a crisis in Marx requiring several hundred pages' worth of unpublished exorcism in *The German Ideology*, even though Feuerbach and Engels had both held favorable initial impressions of Stirner. It seems reasonable to conclude that the confrontation with Stirner's "Unique One" was a significant factor in Marx's diminished interest in species-being, and served as the catalyst that spurred the system-building of historical materialism.

The contention over the humanism of the species-being was a key moment in the enduring friction between Marxian socialism and the idea of anarchy. Dupont sidesteps direct discussion of all that, although he does, in his own way, pay homage to both sides in the Stirner-Marx confrontation. Marx talked of species-being principally in the contexts of alienated labor and consciousness as the marker dividing humans from other animals. This vision, although it emphasizes themes of leisure, alienation, and the content of freedom in everyday life, nevertheless presents the human being too much as essentially producer, too much a man of progress and civilization. Taking it a step further, the human-for-



itself adopts a ludic principle and takes the artist as its model of the universal individual in full communion with creative powers of the self. Dupont recognizes this in his critique of the situationists' re-deployment of use-value through detournement; better than this, he points out, is Oscar Wilde's observation that "all art is quite useless." Decadence and decomposition are more in line with a revolution of desire than earnest commitment to the unity of theory and praxis.

As his contribution to a new theorization of species-being, Dupont describes revolt as the human essence. For him it is permanent, a "spring of perversity that does not run dry." But it is without history or memory, remaining invisible to itself, and tends to fall back into what it has rejected. Hence the repeated failure of revolution. The theory of the proletariat as prime repository of the human essence is retained, a formula deriving from a tradition including council communism by way of the Situationist International: the proletariat can only destroy capital by destroying itself as a class. The main obstacle is not even capital itself, but institutions of the left, which vampirize and divert the forces of negation. Revolt revolts against the specialists of revolt, and against revolution, too. "The goal is to remove all mediating, representational and leadership oriented tendencies. Only when the left is in disarray, turning on itself in a fury of self-hatred do ideas of revolutionary value break out, only when the left despairs of itself is there room for a vaguely human becoming." Sounds good so far.

*Species being* is concerned to a great extent with the problems of organization, consciousness, and the relationship of the revolutionary (or as he puts it, "pro-revolutionary") milieu to the largely

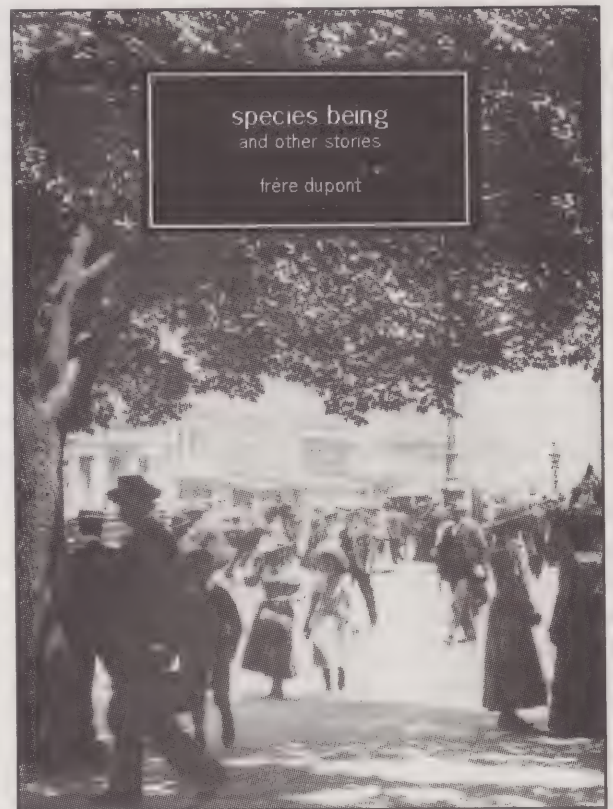
apolitical mass of proletarianized humanity. Other terms he uses are "for-human" (the emergent human community) and "pre-human" (principle of perceived reality, the given of capitalist society that has constituted itself as the world, as reality). Since the building of political parties, unions, and other mass organizations is a leftist sham, along with movements such as anti-imperialism, what if any kind of pro-revolutionary organization can justify itself?

Enter the Earthen Cup. What is it? readers will ask again and again. The mystery is never fully explained, and is perhaps not meant to be. It is a phantom organization of no organization. It can only be negatively defined. It is gamelike, is constantly decomposing and recomposing. Because organizations, once established, always try to perpetuate themselves as bureaucracies, E.C. sees its own decay and dissolution as natural and welcome phenomena. In this way the group can, it is hoped, remain free of the dominant social relations and avoid being recaptured (ie, recuperated or coopted). Any group opposed to this society must necessarily emerge from the pre-human; the revolution must be made by men without qualities. Dupont curiously envisions E.C. as something like brotherhoods, fraternities, and chivalric orders, while also comparing its adepts to wandering minstrels and snake oil salesmen. Such a community refuses and suppresses the world as it is, attempting in its internal life a partial realization of future hu-

man-oriented values, accomplishing this in part through rituals of initiation and association. This sounds much like a religious sect, and Dupont does not shy away from this comparison.

Hakim Bey's Temporary Autonomous Zone or a modern Brotherhood of the Free Spirit might come to mind. Revolution speaking the language of religion, or something like that.

There is some interesting analysis here of religion in the English Revolution. The most radical



currents of the English Reformation pushed in the direction of divine kingliness appropriated by the masses (eg, Ranters and early Quakers imagining Jesus present and embodied in everyone). The French Revolution, with its atheistic rationalism, and usually paid more attention to by the radical left, is passed over without a glance. The further career of the English (and Scottish, German, Dutch, etc.) Ref-



ormation in North America would be interesting to this discussion in that the formation of America as a colonial society dates from this period in the seventeenth century. Here the imported Reformation currents flourished without restraint, even as the religious fervor in England waned. The resources and opportunities of a vast frontier, along with the distraction of pernicious racial ideology, mitigated, for a long time, the effects of class society. Today it is common to associate religion in the United States with the right and the party of order. But there is a long tradition of radical Protestantism on the left, giving rise to abolitionism and utopian movements of various kinds, and contributing to every kind of liberal cause at least through the 1960s. Brotherly love as historical process winds up in the theological roots of the species-being, and Feuerbach's summer of love.

Revolution speaking the language of religion: well, no doubt about it, the "death of God" in the Western world has been in progress for a couple of centuries. But God, let alone Man, still has a lot of dying left to do, despite the best efforts of (pro-)revolutionaries, Nietzscheans, Dadaists, and other nih-coms. Religion persists in the world be-

cause it represents a form of community and consolation that very many people seem loath to abandon. If, as Marx was convinced, Christianity's cult of abstract man is the most fitting form of religion for capital, then one would expect the whole world to have adopted it in submission to the process of world-marketization. But capital has not and perhaps won't be able to establish a truly all-en-

compassing hold on societies everywhere. Even after the ravages of colonialism then and globalization now, most of the world isn't and won't be Christian. China lurches into industrialization with frightening speed; thus far Christianity has not followed on its heels. To the extent that resistance to Western capital speaks the language of religious brotherhood in the contemporary world, that religion tends to be Islam. Dare we inquire into the abstract man of jihad?

In *species being* surrealism is taken to task for its "misogyny" and "macho posturing." Here again Dupont could have gone back to rummage among Marx's thoughts on the subject of species-being: "the relation of man to woman is the most natural relation of human being to human being, man's natural behavior become human," but this too has been left untheorized. Let us hope that the sisters have not been left out of the brotherhood. But if so, well, there's always the sisterhood, isn't there? And indeed, Dupont gives us dialogues in

the manner of detournement so that revolutionary discourses appear in the mouths of medieval nuns.

Another dialogue: Mama cat and her kitten dish up repudiation of the left wing of the state—a variant on the more usual "left

wing of capital"—with reference to Kronstadt. This one sounded a little too cute. Of course, invocation of Kronstadt is itself a well-worn ritual of anarchist (or, gulp, proletarian) martyrdom. But to what effect now? A critique of the left that continues to battle the shade of Bolshevism is none too helpful. As he himself points out, the remaining pieces of floating Stalino-Trotskyist detri-

tus from 1917 are too pathetic and ineffectual to worry about. Is this moment going to return? Unlikely. The cycle of such revolutions is finished.

Yes, by all means we must thwart the Cromwellians and the Social Democratic Leninists. But turning away from the Marxism of political economy may not be enough. Elsewhere Monsieur Dupont has talked about the resurgence of anti-imperialism in ecological and "anticapitalist" garb, about how democracy is actually the biggest obstacle, and here he proclaims the necessity of savaging the left for its "fawning preoccupation with democracy at the expense of life lived." But democracy stands, according to its own ideologists, on liberalism and humanism. Democrats will be more than happy to steal the thunder of anyone who's got something against Soviet-style statism. Dupont doesn't approach the question of whether Marxian humanism—or anarcho-humanism, for that matter—should not also be shredded. That is, after all, something you would expect from a standpoint of nihilism.

Species-being came out of a Christian-philosophical anthropology, but how does it stand in relation to anthropology as a social science? Can we possibly go along with Bruder Marx when he declares history to be the true natural history of man? Humans considered as a species must be considered in relation to the entire web of life and nonhuman nature. If it is to have a meaning to hang a hat on, species-being must have some engagement with the primitive as a key to understanding human beings unalienated from their nature. Aristotle described man as the "political animal" (*zoön politikon*), a statement that lives in infamy among today's anti-political animals. The root is man. Keep digging.

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# Could Neither Politick nor Walk Away

Reviewed by Lawrence Jarach

## **The CNT in the Spanish Revolution, Volume 2**

by Jose Peirats; edited and revised by Chris Ealham  
(Christie Books/Canada Blanch Centre for Contemporary Spanish Studies, 2005)  
270 pages. Paper. £17.00

The project of translating and editing the entire three volumes of Peirats's monumental historical survey of the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT) continues apace (Volume 3 has recently been published). The indefatigable Paul Sharkey is co-translator; professor of history Chris Ealham has brought a loving admiration and careful attention to the task of making this important document available to the English-speaking public for the first time.

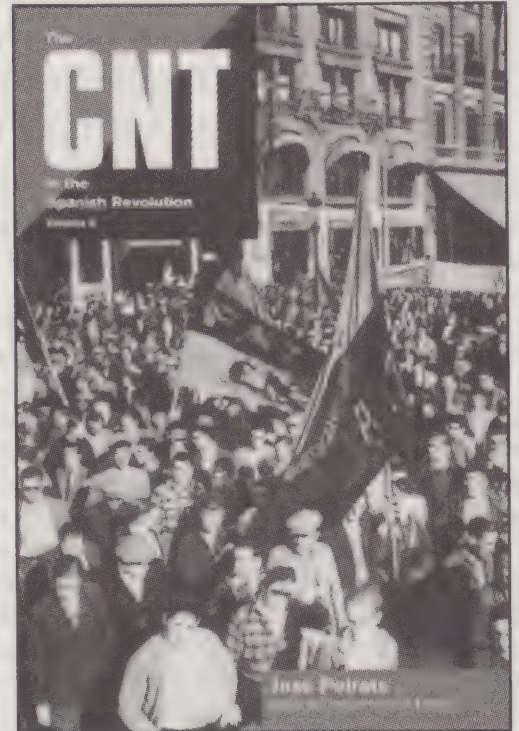
Volume Two begins with the international context of the developing civil war, specifically with the interventions of the Italian fascist and German nazi governments. Diplomatic documents and international press reports are extensively quoted. The disastrous drive for trade union unity with the socialist UGT is fully documented as well. Dealing with the time frame of late 1936 through the end of 1937, Peirats has to (and does) focus on the intrigues originating from the hierarchs of the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) and their Comintern handlers. The downward spiral of continued *cenetista* (member of the CNT) participation in various government ministries and other

official bodies is necessarily detailed in all its painful variations as well, up to and including the ultimate expulsion of anarchist ministers from their cabinet positions.

Of particular note is a call from the CNT press extolling the virtues of iron discipline in the newly constituted Popular Army—flying in the face of the traditional anarchist hostility toward any kind of militarism:

Catalonia's regional plenum of anarchist groups takes the line that militarisation is an ineluctable necessity imposed by the war against fascism and adopts as its own the provisions made in this regard. (32)

This included conscription and the implementation of courts martial (complete with capital punishment) for breaches of military discipline. While it must be taken into consideration that funds and weapons were withheld from any militia column that refused militarization, it is even more important to point out that this was the second serious break with anarchist principles (the first being the entry of *cenetistas* into the Catalan regional government and the central government). Each successive "necessity" was easier to accept and implement, because the precedents of cooperation with government policies had already been set. The big question—asked publicly by only a few anarchists then, but by many now—is how



this evasion and/or reversal of principle and the subsequent forceful capitulation to the logic of statecraft could have been accomplished so quickly. (Our supposed comrades on the Left have the ready answer of course: the anarchists were insufficiently like them, with their vanguardist parties and centralized control over their membership.)

The issue of political power, and what to do with it, was a node of tension and friction within libertarian circles from the outset of the war and revolution. The CNT had never been in a position to implement its programs on any kind of mass scale; suddenly after July 19th, they had both the means and the opportunity—at



least in Catalunya. The *cenetistas* were the only revolutionary faction that was uncomfortable with the fact that they were a minority of the Spanish population; Socialists were accustomed to being part of the government (even during the Primo de Rivera military dictatorship that lasted from 1923-1931), the Republicans had a long history of being a loyal opposition, and the Stalinists could be counted on to behave exactly like Stalinists.

The majority of the working class in Spain was organized in the CNT (while still a minority in certain regions), yet the "influential militants" were queasy about the possibility of making definitive changes in the political landscape. The popular mobilization to defeat the attempted military coup threw the *cenetistas* into some confusion. On the one hand it was clear that in Catalunya, the CNT and FAI were the only real power, both on the streets through the Control Patrols and in industry through the collectives and factory committees. On the other hand, there were other factions that had contributed to the suppression of the coup (specifically: elements of the police forces and soldiers who remained loyal to the Republic, Catalan nationalists, and all manner of socialist and left republican) and there were non-CNT workers who were enjoying the liberation offered by the framework of factory committees and collectives. In the absence of a plenary of regional federations (or a regional or national plenum) of the CNT, there was no way to decide if an anarchist revolution should be fully implemented in Catalunya, and presumably extended throughout those regions

of (Republican) Spain where the CNT was a majority. There was a meeting of those who were readily available at 24-hours notice, and a momentous decision was made. An excerpt from the then- Minister of Health Federica Montseny's speech from January 3 1937 sums it up:

Our steadfastness... also successfully shifted reformist socialism as such on a revolutionary

footing... Without amendment of the anarchist philosophy we have managed to adapt ourselves to the circumstances... We, like the statist communists or socialists, insist upon the total realisation of our ideals. Once this was agreed, our position boiled down to this: either we remain in opposition, in an opposition incomprehensible in that we all had to marshal our efforts around the bourgeois republic (bourgeois, but it stood for liberation against fascism) or we made our stand whenever circumstances obliged us to... sometimes one has no option but to amend even one's own opinion of the facts which supervened in a way other than the manner which had to have been anticipated... Had we proceeded on 19 July to implement the totality of our libertarian ideals, the upshot would have been catastrophe, just as it would have been if the Stalinists or socialists made the attempt... For this reason we were the first to introduce a note of deliberation into our aspirations... We Spanish anarchists, cognisant of the overwhelming needs im-

posed by the circumstances of the moment, have espoused a line of conduct designed to avert a repetition of what happened in Russia where anarchism, for all its might, was ousted from the leadership of the revolution by a minority organisation... we could have embarked upon the adventure of wholesale conquest of our ideals. We did not, lest we wreck everything... The CNT's entry into the central government and into the Generalitat [semi-autonomous government of Catalunya] ensured that the anarchist movement was not ousted from the leadership of the revolution. (99)

The irony—present in hindsight—is that the Stalinists were able expertly to provoke and then crush the only urban-based revolutionary outburst of the remaining radical anarchists a mere four months after Montseny's speech (what has been called the May Days). Within a few days of that, they were able to consolidate their power and behind-the-scenes control of the Central government under the right-wing socialist Dr. Negrin; they were then able "to implement the totality" of Moscow's program with minimal resistance.

Peirats has a personal analytical perspective that is both proud of and highly critical of the CNT and its trajectory from a vigorous oppositional movement into a scapegoat for all manner of political blunders and defeats. At one point he refers to the "circumstantialist psychosis that affected most libertarians during the war" (77). Regardless of the naivety of the "influential militants" and the essentially conservative practices of the various committees, Peirats never contemplated a break with his movement; this was the case for a majority of *cenetistas*—in

Any critical and historical analysis of anarchist praxis must take into consideration both the triumphs and the failures of our Spanish predecessors.



another context Ealham has commented on the cultural aspect of renegades from the CNT and how they were viewed by *cenetistas*. Special mention should also be made with regard to the fate of the members of the Friends of Durruti, who called for the shooting of various leaders of the CNT and other parties, who were denounced as provocateurs by the Catalan Regional Committee of the CNT, but who nevertheless remained *cenetistas* to the bitter end.

Peirats comments bitterly on the outcome of the tragedy of the May Days:

the CNT was unprepared morally or psychologically. One does not change the mentality of an entire movement with a simple decision to take a hand in politics. The CNT's very powerlessness to adapt its policy throughout the war is proof of that. And the most tragic thing for the CNT was the confusion of not being able to politick nor yet being able to walk away from it. The upshot was at all times a lack of agility in its resolutions which almost always came too late. In most instances bewilderment and doubt prevailed. The constant invocation of anti-fascist loyalty, sacrifice and compromise was the finest expression of its political impotence. (144)

In Paris on June 18, 1937, at a rally in solidarity with the Spanish revolution, two of the anarchist former ministers gave their appraisals and rationales for their entry into those ministries, and the subsequent defeat of any and all anarchist gestures and projects. They blamed everyone but themselves. Garcia Oliver stated:

...we could have gone on directing the war and the revolution without needing to join

the government of Catalonia or the Spanish government, had the international proletariat not abandoned us, as abandon us it did... So we were left with the dilemma of whether to face up once and for all to Spain's political problem either by introducing libertarian communism or by accepting governmental collaboration... And so we took a hand in the government. (189)

Montseny likewise complained:

The international proletariat, the European democracies have refused to grasp this elementary and simple fact—that the fate of the world is being worked out in Spain. The democracies have failed as state entities and the proletariat has failed as a revolutionary force against fascism. (189)

It's one thing to hear about the pro-government anarchists; it's quite another to read their statements and attempted justifications for initial and continued participation in a hostile—and indeed counterrevolutionary—institutional environment. The mental gymnastics required at the time were brutal; the intervening years have not diminished it.

Going through any decent study of the revolution and civil war consistently brings the anarchist reader along a similar emotional arc: starting with high hopes, feeling proud to be part of a tradition that so fundamentally transformed many of the nasty aspects of Spanish (and in some sense, European) capitalism, and then being saddened and out-

raged at the immaturity and lack of clarity shown by the "influential militants" of the CNT and FAI (which is separate but obviously still tied in with the duplicity and anti-revolutionary antics of the Republicans, Socialists, Catalanists, and Communists). My outrage and disappointment only increased as I read through this volume, where many of the wrong turns and missteps are presented in the words of the blunderers themselves. Since the eventual outcome is already known, the errors and lapses of judgment of the various *cenetistas* make for difficult reading. Nevertheless, it remains imperative to engage with that difficulty, because any critical and historical analysis of anarchist praxis must take into consideration both the triumphs and the failures of our Spanish predecessors.





# CLASS STRUGGLE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS OR THE PRESS OF BUSINESS

Reviewed by Bob Black

## 2007 Publishing & Distribution Catalog

(AK Press 2006)

Paper. 80 pages. Free.

This is a leaner, meaner AK Press Catalog than the previous annuals “which g[ot] longer and more expensive each year,” Thus announcing up front what AK Press is about: money. “We are highlighting the AK Press editions”—from which AK profits twice, as publisher and as distributor—and “new distribution items” (to see if they sell well enough to qualify for the third category, which is)—“a selection of customer favorites” (faster moving product). There is of course some self-fulfilling circularity here. Product sells because it is advertised, and is advertised because it sells. But *quality* is not mentioned as a consideration in AK marketing decisions, any more than it figures in AK publishing decisions. AK is at least consistent. But so are serial killers.

Nonetheless, the new catalog is otherwise just like the earlier versions—less of more of the same, as some wag once witticized. A majority of the material AK publishes, and a still larger majority of what it distributes, is still not anarchist—not

merely not anarchist in some purist sense, but not anarchist by any stretch of the imagination (a quality notably lacking, anyway, at AK Press), and not even marketed as anarchist by the AK Press Gang.

Likewise the tradition continues of reserving the cover illustration for authoritarian leftists. This time it depicts macho Black Panther Party leaders posturing at a press conference, and is taken from a new AK production, an over *twelve-hour* DVD on this racial nationalist, male supremacist, agent-ridden gang. The police so exaggerated the Party’s own revolutionary chest-thumping that they came to believe their own lies and violently suppressed the Party. I wonder if the footage includes the odious odysseys of Huey Newton (gunned down during a drug deal) and Eldridge Cleaver (who, even *before* hiring out to the right, celebrated his rape of white women as an affirmation of his black manhood). I hope it also includes a Panther leader’s speech to the last SDS convention, orating that the proper position for women in the movement was prone. (Did he mean “supine,” or was he a sodomite?) There was

nothing anarchist about this self-styled vanguard party, unless you count its brief, overpublicized operation of a soup kitchen.

The nine new AK titles are a fair biopsy (would that it were an autopsy) of the Catalog. Only two titles are unequivocally anarchist. The only book worth reading is the reprint of *Vision on Fire: Emma Goldman on the Spanish Revolution*. Typically it is by a member of the classical anarchist pantheon. AK would never publish anything so radical if Goldman were writing today. The other title is *Rebel Alliances* by Ben Franks, “Concentrating on the class-struggle tradition within anarchism, as represented by the current national federations in Britain.” There are books that you can’t put down. This is one that you can’t pick up. I can put it down without picking it up.

There’s a CD from fading pop stars and self-styled anarchists Chumbawamba, one of AK’s financial angels (the others are Noam Chomsky and AK founder Ramsay Kanaan’s rich mother, whose initials are “AK”). And there is an anthology of “academic scholars and engaged individuals” (yawn) co-edited by fired professor David Graeber, an example of a familiar figure on the AK scene: a social democrat who calls himself an anarchist. But anyway this is not an anarchist book. The rest? There is the Panther DVD; the Stalinist old (public) school boy Al-

We would rather think of ourselves as activists than as consumers, but we are consumers all the same, and we will have to consider the challenge of AK Press.



exander Cockburn; liberal publicity hound Jello Biafra; media critic Robert Fisk; and the unspeakable Ward Churchill.

Churchill is truly a piece of work: ex-Long Range Recon ("search and destroy") in Vietnam; ex-Weatherman; ex-white man; American Indian Movement splitter; tenured faculty without a Ph.D or a single scholarly publication; non-Indian pan-Indian nationalist; anti-Semite; and, needless to say (but, in a letter to *AJODA*, he did say it), no anarchist. AK Press is forever fumbling for his zipper. Churchill always publishes there the books that even other leftist publishers shrink from. He was keynote speaker at the (unofficially) AK-controlled Bay Area Anarchist Bookfair two years ago. When David Horowitz and other right-wingers campaign against campus academic freedom, Exhibit A is always Ward Churchill. Churchill has always had *agent provocateur* written all over him. That is how many Native American activists regard him. As I once remarked (*AJODA* 46), "You'd have to be awfully stupid, even by lax anarchist standards, not to notice that this guy has always had *agent provocateur* written all over him." And as Churchill himself once observed in this magazine, you don't have to be an agent to do an agent's work.

Churchill realized and suppressed himself—and, if he has handlers, may have made himself too hot to handle—with his infamous essay on 9/11. His argument: Everybody who perished at the World Trade Center (including, presumably, the airline passengers) got what they had coming: not just the lawyers and bankers and stockbrokers and (later) the cops, but also the secretaries, the bank tellers, the janitors, the parking lot attendants, and (later) the

firemen. The little people were "little Eichmanns." *He really said that*, although AK calls all of the criticism a "smear campaign" against what were merely "controversial remarks concerning the culpabilities of the functionaries administering U.S. economic and political policies," such as fry cooks and temps. Presumably an employee of the University (and therefore of the State) of Colorado like

Churchill does not qualify as such a functionary. Not a few who died that day were nonwhite, unlike Professor Churchill. Rumor has it that, to avoid litigation and further bad publicity, the University is buying out Churchill's tenured position. Rest assured that he will, literally, sell out. AK will hail him as a hero and martyr.

It's not possible to provide even thumbnail reviews of the many AK Press books which no anarchist publisher could possibly publish. The catalog, like the larger selection on the website, consists overwhelmingly of books and other products whose politics are nationalist, liberal, Marxist, social democratic, authoritarian (so-called radical) feminist, liberal feminist, Third Worldist, or racist.



AK's relation to Noam Chomsky, as to Chumbawamba, is corrupt. As to them, AK functions as a vanity press masquerading as an independent publisher. The current, slimmed-down catalog carries 16 Chomsky titles. Most consist of tendentious, repetitive ephemera: speeches and interviews. Churchill is also getting to that point, probably more out of laziness and contempt for his publisher and readers than because of the old age, fatigue, and peevish impatience which noticeably afflict Chomsky, who cannot understand why anyone still disagrees with him about anything.

Chomsky's interview in *AJODA* #29 disclosed how utterly out of touch he is with contemporary anarchism. El Presidente Hugo



Chavez (a statist leftist with authoritarian tendencies) may have learned something about US imperialism from Chomsky, as he related to the UN General Assembly, but a lot more people have gotten the same lowdown from *Harper's* or *The New Yorker*, or from many alternative and small press publications and internet sites. But now we have *Chomsky on Anarchism!* After 40 years, he has outed himself as an anarchist. Who would have ever suspected it? Certainly nobody who read all the Stalinist and nationalist manifestos he signed in full page ads in the *New York Review of Books* (By People Who Write for the New York Review of Books).

I mean really, why reprint, from 1970, *At War with Asia: Essays on Indochina?* Is there currently no unpublished anarchist book more worthy of publication by an anarchist publisher? Even AK says it has 20 more titles it would publish next year if it could. C.A.L. Press has several in the pipeline, but lacks for sugar daddies. Chomsky was, and is, like AK Press, an anti-imperialist fellow traveler, a sucker for any Third World authoritarian nationalist gang that seizes state power, or tries to, or wants to.

Or why publish—and showcase in the print catalog—any book by the unscrupulous manipulator Michael Albert? Especially *Moving Forward: Program for a Participatory Economy* (“Parecon”)? AK asks: “If not capitalism, then

what?” Albert answers: Capitalism. “The only game in town at the moment,” echoes AK. Capitalism is a participatory economy. For most people, their participation assumes the commodity-form of wage-labor. Albert has his own vanity press, South End Press, so why does AK publish him, unless as an affirmation of solidarity with Albert’s program of self-managed capitalism (say, sort of like AK Press itself)? According to Leibnitz’s Law of the Identity of

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Indiscernibles, if every predicate of X is possessed by Y, and every predicate of Y is possessed by X, then X and Y are identical. Let X = AK Press and let Y = South End Press, and it follows that they are identical. Even Albert, who is capable of almost any misrepresentation, isn’t impudent enough to claim to be an anarchist.

Two years ago, at a get-together of some of the BAS-TARD conference organizers, somebody asked, “What does ‘para’ mean?”

in expressions like paralegal, paramedic, etc. Someone else said, “Para means ‘something like.’” “So then,” I asked, “does Parecon mean ‘something like a con?’”

And then there is AK’s relation with the late Murray Bookchin, whose books AK cheerfully reprints, years after Bookchin announced that, not only was he not an anarchist, he had never been one—something his many critics had long since demonstrated. This too is likely a corrupt or at least a profit-driven decision. I suspect that Bookchin subsidized these publications;

even if he didn’t, AK trades on his perceived name recognition, as on Chomsky’s. (Bookchin, incidentally, hated Chomsky for being more famous than he was. Chomsky ignored Bookchin.)

In 1995, AK published Bookchin’s *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism*, a senile ostensibly class-struggle diatribe against everything interesting in contemporary anarchism. Including Hakim Bey/Peter Lamborn Wilson (*Immediatism*)—currently reprinted by AK Press!—who was for Bookchin the most decadent of all “lifestyle anarchists,” although Bookchin was too puritanical to mention the biggest reason for his disgust (Bey is an out, proud pedophile). Now AK reprints Bookchin’s 1971 anarchist debut, *Post Scarcity Anarchism*, in its “Working Classic” series no less, oblivious to the fact that this collection absolutely denounced class struggle revolution as passé—as irrelevant, for instance, to Paris May/June 1968, which Bookchin falsely claimed to have observed at first hand, and which he diagnosed as a trans-class revolution.

Since AK Press is more of a commercial than a political enterprise, let’s look at how it plays its capitalist game, the only game in town. Although AK is well-capitalized, its books are overpriced—just compare them to the books of C.A.L. Press or Autonomedia, which are without wealthy sponsors, although Bey (of Autonomedia), like Kanaan, may be investing the benefits of family wealth. Nonetheless AK books are, even aside from their content, of poor quality. Their covers are often ugly, including those designed by the “famed,” “renowned” artist Freddie Baer (famed and renowned mainly as a gossip who is no longer spoken to by anybody interesting enough to gossip about). Typos, misspellings and grammatical errors abound. There is usually no index, although



with current word-processing technology, it is easy to quickly, easily, and cheaply construct one. AK Press apparently does not edit for content, although it censors for content, as it did the Introduction of *Dreams of Freedom* (see the full version in *AJODA* #62).

Some people may say that, for all its faults, on balance AK Press makes a positive contribution to anarchism, because it occasionally publishes or reprints worthy anarchist books, or at least books worthy of anarchist interest. But it's not just a matter of more is better. AK Press is not just a poor excuse for an anarchist publisher. It is also a malign influence on genuine anarchist publishing. When AK publishes a poorly produced, badly edited, overpriced edition of even, say, an anarchist classic—for which there is only a limited market—it effectively precludes any other anarchist or small press or independent publisher from publishing the same book, even if that publisher could have done a better job, and maybe even sold more copies. The Magon anthology *Dreams of Freedom* may be such a book. But some authors would rather be published certainly or sooner, even in a sloppy version, than uncertainly or later. Deceased authors have no say in the matter. But the more books AK publishes—especially since it is also a distributor—the more it consolidates its near hegemony over the publication of anarchist books, although those books are a sideline to its much larger project of leftist publishing.

That business reality may well influence the content of anarchist writing too, in predictably conservative, workerist, social democratic, moralist, and reformist directions. Authors may be writing (or may have already written) with an eye to AK's obvious predilections. AK Press poses a serious problem, and potentially a crisis, for British and

North American revolutionary anarchists. How has this happened? The revival and steady growth of anarchism in the last several decades has made it interesting, not only to the police and the press, but also to leftist ideologues and small-scale venture capitalists, who are sometimes the same (such as Ramsay Kanaan; cf. Caitlin Manning dba *Processed World*). Anarchists think of themselves as a movement, potentially anyway, but capitalists may think of us, not implausibly, as less of a movement than a market.

We would rather think of ourselves as activists than as consumers, but we are consumers all the same, and we will have to consider the challenge of AK Press, which is en route to becoming the W@l-M@rt of anarchism. If you really want to buy an AK Press book, don't waste your money buying it new from AK Press. Although AK pretends to be blackballed by distributors like Amazon.com, that's a flat-out lie. You can even get new AK Press books cheaper there, such as *Chomsky on Anarchism* (\$11.53 vs. \$16.95), *Vision on Fire* (\$12.89 vs. \$18.95), and *Post Scarcity Anarchism* (\$14.78 vs. \$18.95). Better yet, you can get most of them in cheaper used or different (and better) editions. Or soon can. For some reason—I can't imagine why—the market is glutted with previously owned AK Press products. I daresay the Panther video will soon be there at knock-down prices. (And if AK lies about something so easily checked, why believe its claim to be an egalitarian self-managed utopian collective where Kanaan

takes his turn mopping the floor and Crusty the bicycle messenger decides what to publish?)

Capitalism may be the only game in town “at the moment,” but any number can play. AK Press has laughed off principled criticism throughout its 16 years in the United States.

The more books AK publishes—and distributes—the more it consolidates its near hegemony over the publication of anarchist books.

It was imported intact from Scotland by the monied bourgeois workerist Ramsey Kanaan, whose vision—not on fire, merely occluded—remains consistent, in the sense that uncorrected myopia and astigmatism remain consistent. The canny anarchist shopper will not miss out on anything if she takes her business elsewhere. Sooner or later AK's undisclosed inheritances and subsidies will run out, even as its media stars fall dead, dying, or dis-

credited. This strategy has worked before—against Black Rose Books, another pseudo-anarchist publisher of overpriced leftist shoddy, which once had hegemonic aspirations.

The smart money should be put on the post-leftist projects like *AJODA* and C.A.L. Press—not forgetting, among others, *Green Anarchist* (London) and *Green Anarchy* (Eugene)—not only as a matter of principle, but as good business too, because, as I have written, with the worldwide collapse of the left, *anarchy* is the only game in town, if you play for keeps. Or even if you don't.







# To Dance With The Devil

We would like our relationship with capitalism to be simple; we are against it. But behind the simplicity of taking a firm stance is the tragedy of the anarchist archetype. A fixed stance against capitalism, hierarchy, god, the state, oppression, racism, sexism, homophobia (and more); demonstrating curiosity only to find new things to say "no" to. If anarchism<sup>1</sup> is going to continue being interesting, relevant, or challenging into this century, then our reactionary pose has to be confronted.

Let's establish terms. Let us enclose our understanding of capitalism within an anarchist framework rather than a dictionary definition or being enclosed within it ourselves.

Up till now anarchists have defined themselves along the lines of "people who are against all systems of authority" with the systems listed (usually in about this order) being the state, capitalism, the church, civilization, patriarchy, racism, homophobia, etc. This negative definition follows Hegel's "critique of everything that was hitherto held to be the objective truth,"<sup>2</sup> placing anarchists in the role of being socially conscious solipsists, watching the world they refuse to participate in.

Why, then, doesn't anarchism define itself as the idea of being *for* such values as freedom and equality? Freedom and equality, much like all the terms anarchists are against, are open-ended words that demand further engagement before anyone has any idea what they mean. Does freedom mean the same thing that the US says *it* is for and that it institutes as a personal right?<sup>3</sup> Does equality mean the same thing that Communists mean when they refer to it? The taint of the varied uses of these terms has meant that modern anarchists minimize their use of them.

The negative definition of anarchism is not subject to the same scrutiny. Is this because there has never been, nor will there ever be, a regime ruled by the tyranny of being against? Is it perhaps because anarchists do not see their own complicity in the things that they are against (as demonstrated, for example, by their participation in the political process of petition and ballot<sup>4</sup>)? Anarchists are a part of the very

by Aragorn!

system they are against. The line between the constituent parts of that whole and the unified whole is left, by and large, unexamined.

For this, the activist imagination<sup>5</sup> is largely to blame in recent times. Anarchists draw as much, if not more, on the perception that the Civil Rights and anti-war movements of the Sixties were effective models of political and social change. As a result they draw inspiration from the so-called influential militants rather than the spontaneous actions of people, from the meeting and the protest rather than the riot or work slowdown, from the politics rather than the humans. This practice turns the negative definition of anarchism on its head as a positive and reactionary view of social change.

## We must learn the moves

To the extent that an anarchist definition of capitalism deviates from the Marxist one, it does so along the lines of being emotional and value-laden.

For the capitalist and the property owner it [property] mean[s] power and the right, guaranteed by the State, to live without working, the power and the right to live by exploiting the work of someone else, those who are forced to sell their productive power to the lucky owner of both<sup>6</sup>

or

Capitalist... economies make human interactions into commodities: policing, medical care, education, even sexual relations become services that are bought and sold.<sup>7</sup>

This follows the habit of otherworldliness; defining a system that each of us partakes in as separate and outside of ourselves and our activity. While They exploit, force, and commodify, we do something else entirely. Organize resistance, plant community gardens, group bike rides, or protesting them, something outside of

Fritz Eichenberg



They may rarely mention Marx's name but the readers of the *Wall Street Journal* manage economic tension—class conflict—while the rest of society obsesses about the plight of celebrities.

A distinct element of the anarchist understanding of capitalism is that it uses the same language of personal responsibility (although in this case, that of others) that is used to determine one's own behavior. The way you challenge the commodification of human life is to change your relationship with commodities personally; by consuming less, consuming more strategically, or consuming on "your terms." Capitalism is understood less as a social phenomenon than as a violation of the anarchist principle of means and ends being inseparable.

The Marxist definition of capitalism, by contrast, is not subjective. Capitalism is the mode of production that extracts the greatest possible amount of surplus value by the class of private owners, and that consequently exploits labor power (aka the proletariat). This definition is about value, class, power, and production. Those who hold to this economic orientation further claim that through a scientific evaluation of economics, particularly the labor theory of value, the problems with capitalism

While this objective calculation of our situation is useful, it is also a mechanism by which our powerlessness to bring about any change in the situation is rationalized and perpetuated.

their recognition.

The useful thing about the negative anarchist definition of capitalism is that it is not ambivalent, describing capitalism as some post-modern creature that we can pretend to have a relationship of power with, as the culmination of history, or something that could be taken or left.

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can be dissected and deeply understood. Furthermore the solutions provided as socialism, or more radically as communism, arguably have been analyzed through this scientific process rather than a subjective one.

This definition leaves out most human understandings of what living capitalism is. Capitalism

is not living on credit, paying rent, dealing with bureaucrats, not having the time to spend with friends and loved ones, but is the exploitation of one's labor power by the productive forces, thereby creating class tension. The struggle to understand oneself in capitalism (by this definition) is the class struggle, a conflict which, when resolved, is the only hope for the oppressed class.

Political power, properly so called, is merely the organized power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organize itself as a class; if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such, sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will, along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class.<sup>8</sup>

For anarchists the useful characteristic of this definition is to understand the objective, in this case economic, gaze. It is often said that if you want to read a mainstream perspective that takes Marx seriously you need to read the *Wall Street Journal*. They may rarely mention his name but economic tension, class conflict, is managed by the readers of the *Journal* while the rest of society obsesses about the plight of celebrities and reality show outcomes. At the same time that this objective calculation of our situation is useful, it is also a mechanism by which our powerlessness to bring about any change in the situation is rationalized and perpetuated. For every laughable Communist denunciation of anarchist optimism is an anarchist demand for class war by the children of the rich. Rhetoric aside, the only real class war is of the owners against all.

Classic Liberals define capitalism as the social system based on the principle of inalienable individual rights, including life, liberty, and property. This definition is the most common ideological understanding by Americans. It accepts the notion of a society comprised of a balanced relationship between individuals and the ruling order, ie the state. A place where self-governing rational individuals respect each others' rights, the state is checked by the process, and keeps out of the way of the citizenry. This Lockean notion underscores a kind of theoretical logical consistency that sits well for many defenders of the current economic system by placing our role as rational actors on a stage of somewhat human scale. The disconnect between this idea (with its ethnocentric notions of property, rationality, and the individual) and the reality of the state's monopoly on violence, determines exactly how much



life, liberty, and even property the individual is actually allowed to have.

Anarchists would do well to recognize liberal capitalism's reliance on the social building blocks of principles (rights), negotiation (the social contract), and checks-and-balances (voting). Capitalism-as-exchange ends up being invisible in this definition of capitalism, and that is what makes this definition such an effective way to defend intellectually the relationship one has to capitalism. Unchecked domination, inherited power, and the irrationality of believing in the state's desire to defend an individual's rights are invisible here. Who could be against rights, the ability of individuals to enter into contracts with each other and the state, and our ability to keep the state in check? This is the way people can understand themselves within a functioning social order where their own invisibility within it is far less important than the obviousness of defending every aspect of it. Sometimes if it seems believable then it is believed.

Finally, capitalism is defined in the US as the current economic system in which the means of production and distribution are privately or corporately owned, and profits are gained in a free market. Used in this way, we accept capitalism's ahistorical nature (always existing, outside of context, space, or time) and the existence of a free market. This is another economic understanding that differs from the Marxist one; it has a different mythological framework, one where capitalism-itself is the sun, rather than the exploitation of labor.

In this view, capitalism never sets and each of us is free to sell ourselves as labor and buy cheap products shipped from around the world. Truly free. The sun was placed there before the US was founded and since then nothing else has happened; everything here has grown under its light. The freedom we have as consumers is the same as the freedom we have as investors. The connections these ideas have to reality wither in comparison to their rhetorical and propagandistic social power within US culture. This myth is powerful: powerful enough to keep people in misery playing the lottery, powerful enough for people to put themselves in cargo containers to be shipped across the ocean, and powerful enough for people no longer to see capitalism as some-

thing to struggle against. Conscious class struggle in the US is a non-starter either strategically or ideologically, Marxist (even marxist-with-a-black-flag) rhetoric to the contrary.

Whether defined by anarchists, Marxists, political philosophers, or economists, the assumptions in defin-



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ing capitalism frame the ability to think outside, against, and in relation to it. Since anarchists have assumed that they are somehow outside of capitalism, that it is something outside of their experience, their daily lives, and their principles, they have not had a coherent way to engage the liberal notions of individual rights, the economic view of society, or the positive perception that capitalist social relations have had on a preponderance of people.

### Under the pale blue moon

Tensile strength is the amount of force required to



pull something apart. Most of us test tensility every day and, like many properties, we do not need to measure it to understand its effects. A romantic relationship ends because of a series of small inconsiderations. Workers grumble about an asshole manager but nothing happens besides the complaining. A radical re-

There is nothing that can be done to reclaim capitalism.

If we were to be generous in approaching an answer to the question of why the current economic system works so well (emotionally, ideologically, materially) for so many people, it would not be because people are naturally inclined towards shopping, petroleum, or property-rights but because they prefer greater tensile strength over less. One desires a connection to the land that they live on that is greater than what a

At the same time there is the false opposition of anarchist anti-capitalists; their pretense of standing outside capitalism (the same way they would stand in protest outside chain stores or a gathering of world leaders) reflects the weakness of individualistic action.

turns to her family home for the holidays even after she has declared her rejection of normative values and relationships. Tensility has a variety of axes: economic, emotional, cultural.

contract, bank, or surveyor can provide. One desires relationships that don't fall easily under the categories of friend, lover, or family. One desires escapes from even the most pleasant situation one finds oneself in. The simplistic solutions of against approaches to these problems are brittle; they crack at the slightest change in orientation

from their strength. Critique weakens tensility rather than strengthening it.

The coordination of capitalism with the political apparatus, religion, and cultural expectations regarding relationships makes it seem natural. These relationships developed over time, largely by force, and are worth studying. What is the relationship between

the people who go to the same market on Tuesday, the same church on Sunday, and attend the same concerts on Friday nights? Compare this to a group that meets once a year under a flag of truce and spends the rest of the year in open hostility. The anarchist project would be to engage with these examples not because they are worth emulation but because they demonstrate principles of tensile strength.

Tensility can be seen as the relationship between frequency, intensity, variety, and duration of encounters. In the first example we see relationships with relatively high frequency and variety, with low intensity (with occasional high intensity around music) that happens over a long period of time, probably years. In these relationships, even without knowing each other's names, we have a closeness that is not about class composition, shared alienation, or the political project of the total transformation of society. In the second example there is far less closeness with low frequency and variety but high intensity that happens over a long duration. The difference of tensility between these two examples results not from the participant's connection to a shared struggle or idea but from variety, frequency, and manageability.

If there isn't a simple *for* to the anarchist *against*, then perhaps the problem is one of scale rather than goals. As long as society exists on an enormous scale, the scale of 300 million, 1 million, or even a hundred thousand, it is not possible to believe that it will not form a monopoly on violence, an ideological system that preaches freedom while practicing constraint, and an economic system that alienates for the purpose of expediency. Perhaps anarchism is the recognition that a society worth living in should be of a scale within which one can actually have some kind of direct impact.

There is nothing that can be done to reclaim capitalism. Not only has it been the ideological foundation for the extraction of resources and the economic basis of human suffering for centuries, but the term remains a meaningless abstraction. At the same time there is the false opposition of anarchist anti-capitalists; pretending to stand outside capitalism the same way they would stand in protest outside chain stores or a gathering of world leaders reflects the weakness of individualistic action. This isn't improved by the anti-capitalism of left communist traditions whose meek declarations of total opposition are only slightly less individuated than the practices of boycott and self-flagellation.

In this essay there has been no definition of anarchism itself other than to acknowledge the inadequate



definitions that have preceded us. In addition, the positive anarchist principles<sup>9</sup> are an inadequate beginning to an anarchism of today; they are the elegant principles of another time. If anarchism is to face the challenging times ahead it must become the mongrel beast born of the disparate parts of its stately and negative origins. It must become capable of recognizing the complicated relationship between living in the world and against the world, and instead of erring in the direction of liberalism or asceticism. Anarchism must never become a contract between anarchists and a society that doesn't exist, and it should never be a settled question. Anarchism is conflict without compromise, without rulers, and with the choice to engage with the world on our own terms. The fight is more important than the outcome.

#### Notes

[1] The term used throughout this article is anarchism. While I generally support the idea of there being a distinction drawn between a system called anarchism and the desire for something called anarchy, with one being critiqued as an ideology and the other as something else, I also believe that it is a waste of time to confuse the terms with the distinction. In addition, the amount of attention placed on the difference between the two terms has created an anarchyism, an ideology of terms. As a consequence the critique of ideology has become a parody of itself.

[2] Marcuse, Herbert; *Reason & Revolution. Part II, The Rise of Social Theory* <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/marcuse/works/reason/ch02-2.htm>

[3] Which isn't actually true. The Declaration of Independence only refers to free states; the Bill of Rights refers to the freedom of speech, the press, assembly, petition, and arms.

[4] Even to the extent of participating in the elections of politicians (mayor of Arcata, Gonzalez in SF) and petitions (which is what protests are) to the state.

[5] The activist first and foremost believes in her/his own role in cause-and-effect. Their imagination leads them to believe, "If we activists do X, then the government/company/agency/group/person will do Y. And if Y (or any compromised version of Y) happens, then we

are responsible and should take our bows and issue our press releases."

[6] Cutler, Robert M. (ed.); *From Out of the Dustbin: Bakunin's Basic Writings 1869-1871* (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1985).

[7] CrimethInc.; *Fighting For Our Lives: an anarchist primer*

[8] Marx & Engels; *The Communist Manifesto*

[9] Solidarity, Mutual Aid, and Direct Action

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Fritz Eichenberg







# Thinking from the Outside: Avoiding Recuperation

by Andrew Robinson

## *Avoiding recuperation in anarchist businesses*

Why an article on recuperation, in an issue about anarchist businesses? The reason is that the two issues are intimately interconnected. Anarchist businesses constantly run the risk of recuperation. To exist as a business, an anarchist group must, in many ways, work within and through existing dominant structures, both financial and organisational. This means playing the system's game to some degree—albeit for one's own purposes. If not done carefully, this can lead to the reproduction of the very practices one tries to escape, as the systemic form imposes itself on the subversive content. And many of the flaws of anarchist publishing businesses—the dangers of editorial despotism, of market- or funder-led parameters, of the formation of cliques, of simply being reduced to ineffectuality by the repetitive routines of publication—can be viewed as problems of recuperation, problems that have beset many anarchist publications over time.

Of course, anarchist groups can also exist as *non-businesses*, as prefigurative or gift economies, as groups with no formal existence, as encroachers on proper spaces (squatting for instance). But there are some things it is easier to do using structures already in place. Part of the problem is that the system and its allies have in fact seized control of most of the social field. It is thus often difficult, maybe impossible, to work entirely from the outside. So this article sets out to explore an issue central to the operation of anarchist businesses—how (if at all) can one work within the dominant system (or some part of it, such as the publishing market), without being recuperated by it?

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## *Recuperation and intentionality*

From a Stirnerian position, or that of a *bricoleur* looking for tools, there is nothing wrong with using the system against itself, with using the master's tools so to speak. If something serves one's purpose, it is a gesture of Stirnerian egoism to pick it up and use it. A problem arises, however, because in using the system's tools, one may be strengthening it in some way—reinforcing its claim to be the only game in town, giving it the appearance of legitimacy, contributing in some way to its apparatuses (as when anarchist books contribute to the profits of mainstream booksellers). Structures and tools have their own personalities, which can influence the user. An informed tool-user is thus faced with a dilemma over whether, in using this tool at this moment, s/he is really serving her or his purpose or the purpose embodied in the tool.

Working inside the system in any way immediately creates difficulties, not least the dangers of recuperation, reformism, and selling-out. These dangers have a structural form – the turning-against-itself of desire, the conversion of an active force, which uses the external world as a series of tools or partners in dialogue, with a reactive force, which comes to value the fixed forms of the external world as goods in themselves.

Anarchists draw boundaries all the time between recuperated and hybrid actions, but the problem is that the boundaries are ill-defined and under-theorised. Most anarchists would not, for instance, refuse to defend themselves in court, or to accept legal defence, in the event of being accused (especially wrongly accused) of an action. Most would give evidence that could be used to exonerate another anarchist. Yet most view voting in an election as a step too far—even in an extreme case, where for instance



a few dozen votes could mean the difference between a standard statist candidate and a full-scale fascist, or where some candidate promises minor reforms that could make life easier for anarchists (repealing repressive laws for instance). Why is it assumed not to be possible, and legitimate, for an anarchist to vote strategically, without illusions that positive change can come from the electoral system? Why is this ruled out in advance? There are, of course, general theoretical reasons for opposing voting—it grants legitimacy to the system; it can be taken to imply consent; it pretends to be an exercise in freedom, when in fact it isn't; it can't have a real impact on the fundamental problems. But these general reasons would equally apply to appearing in court (replacing the word "freedom" with "justice," and the last sentence with the recognition that acquittals of activists do not in themselves create a fair world). So why the difference? Part of the reason, to be sure, is that leftists *do* encourage voting, and do so with extensive illusions, even while claiming the opposite. Not voting would seem to be a purist exercise, a kind of narcissistic identification-by-exclusion. But there may be other reasons. Maybe the electoral system is particularly prone to produce unwanted outcomes, in a way the court system is not. Maybe if someone votes, they are more likely to feel loyal to certain rulers and to fail to resist them when needed. If someone votes for a candidate who promises minor changes, it would be hard not to feel sold-out if they don't deliver. Or maybe it's that there's a slippery slope from an "anarchist who votes tactically" to leftist electoralism. Maybe it's that the impact of one vote is so small that it is insufficient to offset the considerable dangers. But in any case, it's somewhat paradoxical. I'm not arguing that the different reactions are necessarily wrong and I'm not saying that anarchists should rush out to vote

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tool.

or should stop defending themselves in court. But the point is to think through *why* the difference exists, and *whether* it has a firm basis in the assessment of the situation.

So how to differentiate recuperation from valid tool-use? It is crucial here to consider the question of intentionality. In every living thing, there is a projection-outwards, an agency; the sentient being relates to the world through its desires, through its meaning in a broad sense (in humans, this includes through its unconscious meanings and its social and symbolic constructs), and it reconstructs the world in line with this construction, seeking to create a world where its desires are realised—its "will to power" in a Nietzschean sense, not necessarily a will to dominate others but a reconstruction that makes the world in part its own, that "speaks with its own voice." Each intentionality contains its own perspective, which is not necessarily false, but which uses certain concepts or attachments to make sense of the world—some aspects of the world stand out more than others, because related to one's desires or one's conceptual frame.

Of course, it is not this simple—there is also the problem of the connection between intentionality and world, the possibility that a false or flawed perception might create a constant gap between intentionality and world. This is one of the reasons for Situationists' hostility to many kinds of (pseudo-)radicalism—the repetitive adoption of certain forms of agency was taken to preclude radical outcomes in advance. A leftist militant or (in a recent reconstruction) a liberal single-issue activist might consciously intend to bring about change, but they are still recuperated because their agency, in reproducing the system, places an



insuperable hurdle between their intent and the sought outcome.<sup>1</sup> Or, one might say, there is a contradiction between intent and intentionality: the conscious intent is radical, but the unconscious intentionality blocks it; it contains attachments to systematic aspects of the status quo (division of labour, specialisation, identity, organisation, elitism) that insert themselves between the conscious intent and its realisation, distorting the action to render it harmless to the system. A recuperated project is thus one that loses its transformative intentionality.

It is therefore crucial to ask: can I/we be sure of myself/ourselves not to lose radical exteriority in intermixture? And here one finds the genesis of purism: a purist is someone who lacks the courage of her/his convictions, who is pretty sure that s/he will not withstand the intermixture, who realises unconsciously that s/he is only a step or two off slipping back into conformity and who thus exaggerates differences to create a zone of safety. Though it may not be so simple: sometimes one may have well-founded worries about the resilience of one's fellow actors. Then, of course, there's the question of how confident one *should* be about one's resilience. There is always the possibility that unconscious moorings are not as firm as one might wish; and structures, architectures, interpersonal settings, all have unconscious impacts on the self that are not always calculable in advance. So the question becomes strategic. It is not simply a matter of saying in advance that certain practices are recuperative and others not.

### *Theorising recuperation*

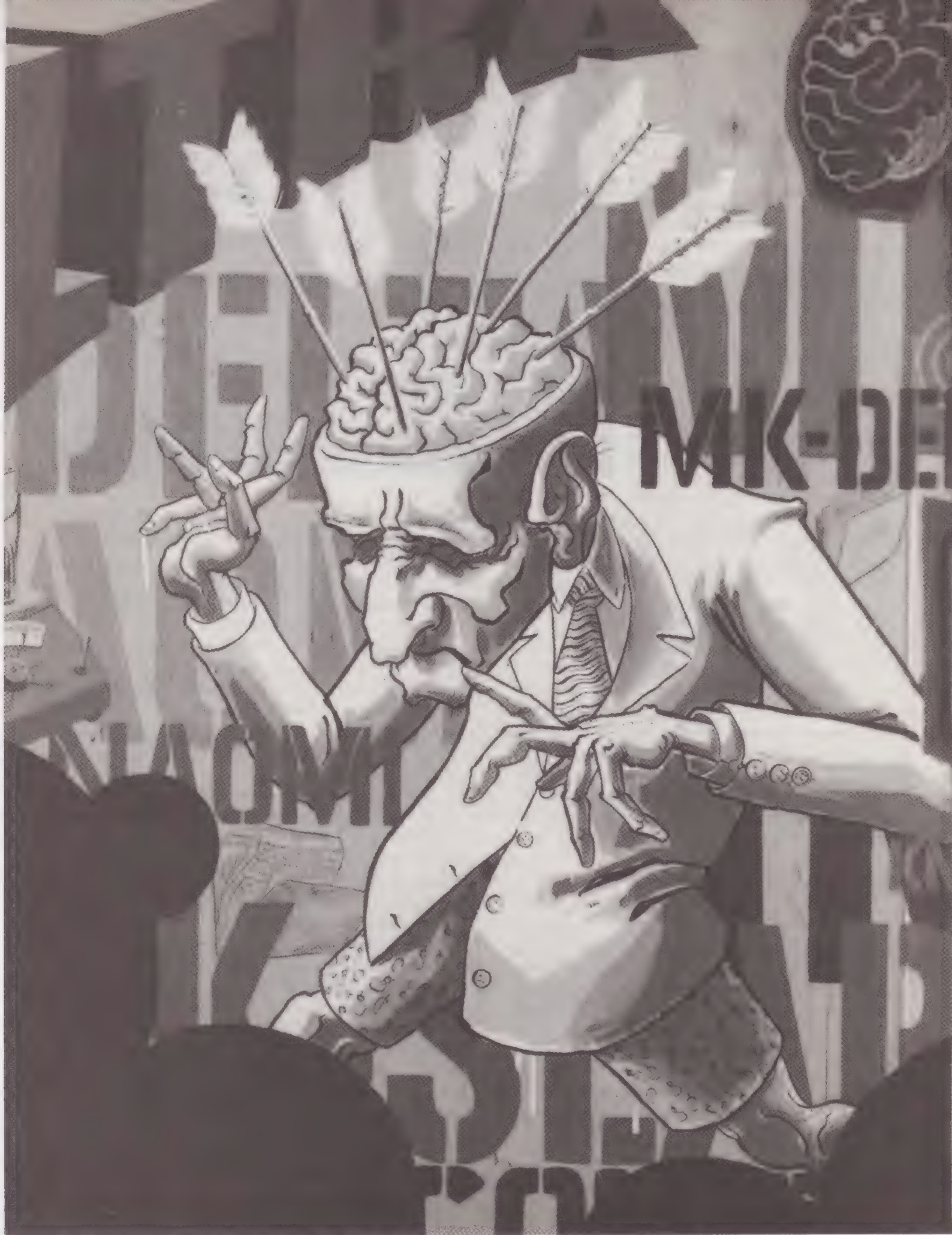
Three similar but distinct theories of recuperation can be compared. The best-known is probably the Situationist version. In Situationist theory, recuperation is counterposed to *détournement*—the turning-aside of the line from its externalising progression. To avoid recuperation, the trick is to keep the line moving outwards, even when it bounces off the walls of the system. A line turned aside must be kept running outside, or else a new line started. "To survive, the spectacle must have social control. It can recuperate a potentially threatening situation by shifting ground, creating dazzling alterna-



tives—or by embracing the threat, making it safe and then selling it back to us.”<sup>2</sup> This is linked, too, to the immediacy and totalism of Situationist theory. Immediacy, because *détournement* is an expression of direct desire; recuperation often works by means of delayed gratification, partial satisfaction, the supplanting of actuality with images. Totalism, because a revolutionary break for the Situationists meant a break with the totality of capitalism; a failure to reject the totality amounts to recuperation (obviously this identification of a single totality is more of a problem once micro-social oppressions are considered).

Autonomist Marxism has a similar theory, going as far as to theorise the whole of capitalism as recuperative. Workers' labour is creative, amounting to an active force; capitalism is built through the capture and exploitation of this creativity, turning it aside from its intentionality (of communism or the common) and turning it against itself, thus keeping the subjective force of labour objectified by capital.<sup>3</sup> On this account, labour is communist when it resists the imposition of the commodity form, and recuperated when it accepts the sale of labour-power as a commodity. While usefully theorising the importance of dissident creativities for sustaining the self-transformations of the system, and the extent to which what life the system achieves is built from what it steals or destroys, this account misunderstands the capitalist work-economy, where workers'









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activity is not simply exploited but is also constructed as non-creative, as subordinate. Between the *refusal* and the *abolition* of work lies the problem of theorising social activity outside the confines of the wage-labour system: the question of whether a working-class subjectivity focused on production can be separated from its estrangement in the commodity without a rejection of the primacy of work in life, and whether a non-alienated workplace (*place of work*, as opposed to *space* for creativity and play) is either possible or desirable.

Finally, Deleuze and Guattari have a theory of overcoding and axiomatics, in which escaping flows are reinscribed in the system by means of being assigned a code or an axiom (as in niche marketing and identity politics for example).<sup>4</sup> This theory is important also, in understanding the basis for thinking about *what* escapes and is recuperated. For Situationists and autonomists, creative activity tends to be identified with labour; hence, their critiques cannot be followed through into a rejection of the work-system as a whole—refusal of work always remains in a tension with power to the workers. It is the *replacement* of work with desire as the basic creative force that opens the possibility for a more radical critique—and also for theorising more clearly the difference between hybrid and recuperated formations.

An anarchist intentionality is thus an exterior intentionality, defined by the exteriority of the desire that motivates it in relation to systems of hierarchy and control. And the maintenance of intentional exteriority (at both conscious and unconscious levels) is the lynchpin of avoiding recuperation. This conclusion will make more sense if discussed in relation to specific instances.

### *Purism or hybridism?*

In part, the issue comes down to a

An anarchist intentionality is thus an exterior intentionality, defined by the exteriority of the desire that motivates it in relation to systems of hierarchy and control. And the maintenance of intentional exteriority is the lynchpin of avoiding recuperation.

question of purism or hybridism. A purist approach insists on keeping separate from any possibility of contamination with the Other, maintaining a strict and rigid boundary. In contrast, a hybrid approach seeks to undermine the purity of a hostile Other by means of combinations and intermixing that break down the rigid separation. Underlying the choice between these approaches are two further questions. First, is an anarchist ethic a matter of simple differentiation, of something existing within the system of signifiers, choosing one option over another, or is it an ethic that breaks down the differential categories of the system? Second, are hybridities—in general or in particular cases—a means by which anarchism is contaminated and watered-down or destroyed from the outside, or a means by which this outside is itself watered-down and destroyed? The first question is philosophical, the second very much practical.

On the philosophical question, the answer is easy. In fact hybridity need not be seen as a threat. Anarchy is a force of flow, and flow can survive and flourish on intermixing. It is, rather, apparatuses of fixity that are threatened by intermingling and ambiguity. Wherever a flow enters into a hybrid assemblage without losing its affirmative energy, it is the structure, and not the flow, that is weakened. Further, the purist drive is itself reactive, expressing subordination to a spook—the spook of the category of *anarchist* or *activist*, constructed the same way as any other identity: a social role based on exclusion. The purist activist is no different from a politician or a priest; they hold up a certain role as the bearer of salvation, all the time moulding their own desires to fit the role and castigating others for being too liberated (or “not liberated



enough," in the paradoxical stance of "forcing to be free"). In anarchy, there could be no roles, as there would be no rigid categorical boundaries, no hierarchies of meaning, no subordination of desire to representation. I say "would be," for it is not clear that anarchy of this kind has really been created, even among anarchists.

Thus, one threat gives way to another—the desire to remain outside, to avoid complicity, can lead to a structural imitation of the system, the construction of a fixity, an apparatus of exclusion. Precisely in its repetition in inverted form of what it opposes, purism tends to reproduce the structures it is against, either because it imitates them as its Other—the way for instance, armed groups can turn into miniature state-like armies—or because it needs what it opposes to define its own identity. "An armed gang?" ask the Italian insurrectionist defendants. "Too poor a thing: it would not have been able to contain our excessive intentions. Too narrow a thing: it would only constrict our uncontainable explosions."<sup>5</sup> The purity of such otherness cannot contain the flows that escape the system's inscriptions; ultimately it remains trapped in such inscriptions by its self-reduction to the system's categories.

### *Exteriority in everyday life*

The strategic question is more complicated. A lot depends on how confident one can be in one's power as an actor.<sup>6</sup> In a hybrid setting, where two intentionalities collide, there is a clash of forces, a kind of mutual predation. This gives rise to questions of which intentionality is succeeding. The answer would be very simple if the clash were of antagonistic forces, but it is more about the survival capacity of an ethic and a set of attachments, about whether each force can survive the intermixture without losing itself in the other; the resilience, so to speak, of an ethic.<sup>7</sup> If an ethic is firmly established in one's attachments and beliefs, it should be resilient—it should be able to withstand all kinds of intermixtures, hybrid actions, alliances, dialogues, and "sly civilities" intact, provided the intentionality for entering into these is its own.

How do oppressed peoples unable (for the time being) to escape tyranny nevertheless construct worlds of their own? Research about slaves, peasants, workers, prisoners, suggests a constant pattern. First a new discourse is constructed in spaces



that are cordoned off from the wider society, a "hidden transcript" inaccessible to the masters.<sup>8</sup> Second, the public discourse—the discourse imposed as public performance by the masters—is inflected and subverted in ways that import little bits of this hidden transcript, sometimes visible only to the oppressed, sometimes forcing small modifications that rewrite the official discourse. Third, the hidden tran-

script bursts into public at moments of crisis and insurrection, when the public transcript becomes unsustainable. Its previous covert existence is thus hardly in vain; through such means, the script is written for the performance to come. James Scott's work on the peasantry is awash with discussions of these issues. In Vaneigem's *Movement of the Free Spirit*, the same phenomenon is discussed in relation to medieval European religion.<sup>9</sup> The terminology, rituals, and schemas of the dominant religion were given a different, subversive, content, which made them harder to track and suppress. In slave societies, one central form of hybrid resistance was the hush arbor, a space created in the interstices of the slave society for the expression of alternative conceptions and nascent resistances.

Erving Goffman's *Asylums* contains a remarkable example of a prisoner who stands to attention and "yes sirs" the guards, even while hiding a plank behind his back that will be used in an escape tunnel. "An inmate meeting and passing an officer without causing the officer to correct the prisoner's manners appears to be ... properly accepting of his imprisonment. But ... such an inmate may be concealing under his coat a couple of bed boards to be used as roof timbers in an escape tunnel." In such a case, the inmate is not the person the guard sees, and is not fully trapped within the life-world supposedly imposed in prison. "The inmate is fixed ...



but his capacities have migrated.”<sup>10</sup>

It would be hard to typify such practices as recuperated; they remain carriers of an alternative intentionality, of an insurrectionary desire that exceeds the limits of the existing system. But they involve on the surface what appears to be recuperation—what indeed, is often deliberately made to seem as recuperation to the powerful. This is what Homi Bhabha calls “sly civility”—playing the civil citizen in front of the powerful, but in a sly way, so as to pull the wool over their eyes while also carrying out plans to resist. “Between the western sign and its colonial signification there emerges a map of misreading that embarrasses the righteousness of recordation and its certainty of good government. It opens up a space of interpretation and misappropriation that inscribes an ambivalence at the very origins of colonial authority.”<sup>11</sup> It thus creates a density to everyday life, impenetrable to colonial power—an otherness that cannot be brought within an absorbing dialectic.<sup>12</sup>

On the other hand, there are situations where a pure or radical antagonism becomes the defining stance of an opposition movement. This is particularly common in the kinds of anti-colonial movements discussed by authors such as Frantz Fanon and Ward Churchill. In these cases, a subordinate group is denied any possibility of voice in the system, but is constantly subordinated to its violence, treated as Other within the system. In such contexts, there is no common ground between included and excluded, and antagonisms become sharp and abrupt. A similar sharpness of antagonism typifies the relationship between included and excluded in contemporary control societies according to Alfredo Bonanno, who reconfigures the idea of class struggle around “the division of classes between dominators and dominated, between included and excluded.”<sup>13</sup> Labelled as anti-social or inhuman, the radically excluded have little possibility for using the system’s categories against it; they are in a per-

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or an axiom  
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and identity  
politics).  
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and is  
recuperated.

manent condition of social war. In these cases, it is the radicality of the exclusion that necessitates the sharpness of the divide—though sometimes, the total rebellion of the excluded is itself a kind of dialogue—at best, a “no” to the system that attempts to be everywhere; at worst, a simple return to reformist demand by insurrectionary means. Even in the worst case, one should not underestimate the importance of such demand for survival and dignity, and the transformative potential of the unconditionality of survival and dignity when pursued by the radically excluded.<sup>14</sup> This kind of radical antagonism is certainly a part of everyday resistance, but the hybrid type is probably more common, and attempting to generate radical antagonism in a context where it is not structurally constructed runs the risk of purism.

### *Theories of everyday resistance*

To further examine the boundary between recuperation and hybridity, let us compare three authors whose work centres on the formation of subjectivities and agencies outside the system (as opposed to direct frontal challenges to it): William Connolly, Colin Ward, and Hakim Bey. Connolly is a radical theorist within academia, and is attached to the perspective known as “radical democracy.” His work calls for the development of subjectivities that resist the resentment built up in mass societies (through the construction of fixed identities, blaming problems on scapegoats, and promoting religious and other fundamentalisms) by means of ethical action on the self. Much of this is indirectly relevant to activists; but ultimately I would say Connolly is a recuperated figure. He accepts the primacy



of the existing social structure and its signifiers; his ultimate allegiance is to democracy, and he looks to the state for protection.<sup>15</sup> He is seeking to solve the social problems of the system, not to overcome it; his radicalism is thus supplementary to the system, rather than antagonistic to it. Colin Ward, once a controversial figure within British anarchism, worked to make anarchism respectable among academics, especially within sociology; his doctrine of “evolutionary anarchism,” stressing the growth of horizontal social movements within the existing society and celebrating movements such as squatting and tenant activism, was sharply counterposed to the Marxist-inflected revolutionary anarchism of the then-dominant left-anarchist groups. Evolutionary anarchism is limited as a doctrine, but in many ways Ward prefigured the later emergence of post-left anarchy, stressing the micropolitics of everyday life. Despite rarely sounding it, Ward’s approach is a revolution in everyday life, exemplified by the idea of freedom expanding to the point where it strains at the chains that bind it, ultimately shattering the system through its proliferation. Finally, Bey is very much an insurgent figure, speaking openly of smashing the system and writing provocatively of “poetic terrorism.” His proposals for action—especially his most famous concept of Temporary Autonomous Zones—are similar to those of Ward, but are conceived as acts of insurrection, as breaking down the hegemony of the system by creating liberated spaces that challenge its power. By aiming for the excess in reality over its inscription in the system, or of the “territory” over the “map,” Bey seeks to explode the appearance of totality and bring about a proliferation of chaotic multiplicities.

What is the difference between the politics of desire of the three authors? Connolly goes as far as he can—as a statist—in the direction of freeing active desire; but ultimately his emphasis is always on limits, on questioning *one’s own* fixities, on restraint and forbearance.<sup>16</sup> Such attitudes may be useful in mediating horizontal conflicts in an entirely horizontal world, but in a world dominated by hierarchic systems, they detract from the sharpness of antagonism. The unconditionality of a Fanonian antagonism is anathema from this perspective; it would appear equivalent to a fascist or fundamentalist position. The result is not far from the traditional functions of Christian morality, and the “ideological function of moral-

ity” analysed so effectively by Tony Skillen—to displace social problems from the social system that is their real origin, onto individuals, who are blamed for not coping with the effects of these problems or for being the wrong kinds of people.<sup>17</sup>

Ward, too, calls for refiguring certain radical conflicts as horizontal by questioning the privilege of dominant assumptions. For instance, he discusses the conflicts arising from resource-use conflict between children and adults on poor housing estates in horizontal terms, stressing the need for inclusion and



dialogue and a recognition of the intentionality involved in children’s reappropriation of urban spaces as spaces of play.<sup>18</sup> This is similar to Connolly’s dialogical reconfiguration of social conflicts. But here the emphasis is rather different. What Ward is rejecting is the dogmatic construction of the in-group’s preferred uses as natural or morally right uses, and the resultant imposition of voicelessness on another. He is not suggesting that children’s rebelliousness is morally equivalent to the adults’ fundamentalism, nor that the answer is more restraint all round. His response is *social* (in the sense of Kropotkin’s “social principle”: horizontal, autonomous, dialogical)—not moral.

Finally, for Bey, the whole point of autonomous



agency is to open up spaces of rupture. “[T]he *up-rising* suggests the possibility of a movement outside and beyond the Hegelian spiral of that ‘progress’ that is secretly nothing more than a vicious circle... In this sense an uprising is like a ‘peak experience’ as opposed to the standard of ‘ordinary’ consciousness and experience. Like festivals, uprisings cannot happen every day—otherwise they would not be nonordinary. But such moments of intensity give shape and meaning to the entirety of a life.”<sup>19</sup> The space of the uprising may well be temporary and in a sense hybrid, but it is a radical outside, and its differentiation from the ordinary life of the system is the reason for its existence. In this analysis, the transformative possibilities of partial and temporary liberated spaces are explored to the maximum.

The three theories are similar, but display crucial differences that illustrate something vital about the boundary between hybridity/partiality and recuperation. Bey and Ward both embrace partial, hybrid, everyday resistances that reclaim spaces without shattering the system. They both see such spaces as part of a challenge to the system’s pervasiveness, as insurgent spaces—though how they see the system’s destruction proceeding may be rather different. I’m tempted to say that Bey and Ward are calling for the same thing, but whereas Ward tones down his rhetoric to appear respectable, Bey glosses the same ideas in an unapologetically radical way, using provocation and extremity to aesthetic effect, and Bey is rather clearer about the relationship between such partial challenges and the system’s disruption and overthrow. How do they differ from Connolly, and avoid his return to the logic of the system? Ultimately, they are theorists of exteriority, or better still, theorists writing from outside; they do not attempt to

The danger of recuperation is not taken away by conceiving it in terms of intentionality or purpose. While hierarchic institutions remain strong, it is not possible to take away the risk of recuperation; but it is possible to negotiate this risk in more or less creative ways.

solve the system’s problems for it, but rather, to solve problems defined from another intentionality, and they do not ultimately start from a standpoint of restraint that places their own agency as secondary to a transcendental entity or limit (Ward exhibits restraint only in style, and Bey not at all). So exteriority emerges as the definitive feature of a non-recuperated theory.

#### *Exteriority in practice: the Zapatistas*

The Zapatistas are an example of a movement that straddles this divide, playing with both radical otherness and hybridity for strategic effect. The situation of the initial uprising, and of the continued adversarial relation with the Mexican state, is a situation of voicelessness of a typical kind, the “invisible Indian” as one scholar puts it, in which indigenous voices are excluded from Mexican politics or subordinated in its patronage structures<sup>20</sup>. There was also a typical recuperative process underway: the Mexican state’s recognition of the “uses and customs” of indigenous peoples allowed the formation of elite-centred patronage nodes integrated into the PRI structure.<sup>21</sup> But still, the basic situation was one of voicelessness and invisibility. Hence the radicality of the initial Zapatista break—its emergence as an event symbolising a deep rupture, a Fanonian moment. And on many levels this break is continued in Zapatista practice: the Zapatistas refuse to endorse parliamentary candidates, Marcos has repudiated the party form in his famous cry to shit on the vanguards, and negotiations with the state have occurred in an external way, between two distinct agencies. But on the other hand, the Zapatistas also make use of Mexican nationalist discourse, alliances with popular social move-



ments, inclusive *encuentros* (often including party activists and leftists among others),<sup>22</sup> and a dialogical process with the Mexican state, exemplified in the now-defunct San Andres Accords. How, then, do the Zapatistas avoid the recuperation that has afflicted many Mexican social movements and which sometimes tamed indigenous dissent? The answer, I think, is that the Zapatistas enter into dialogue and hybridity, but do so as a distinct agent, from the outside so to speak. This exteriority is crucial to their avoidance of recuperation: their dialogue with leftists and the state does not recuperate them because they do not become part of these forces; they retain a separate intentionality that they bring to the dialogue or *encuentro*. This exteriority is maintained even in dialogue; indeed, in a situation of radical exclusion, it is the *precondition* for dialogue, for the recognition that a previously invisible and voiceless perspective even exists.

This exteriority from the power-apparatus—from all power-apparatuses—is definitive of the subversive force of radical and anarchist movements, and it is in the conversion of this nomadic exteriority into an interior category (however pure, specialised, or mediated this category might be) that the roots of recuperation can be found; as long as it operates as interiority, anything can be made safe for the system. The reductive or Hegelian logic of the system is crucial here.<sup>23</sup> The system operates by turning external moments—forces that oppose it, resist it, or remain outside it (not to mention those that constructed it in the first place, which are its own conditions of possibility, the contingent roots of its historical emergence)—into derivative or secondary moments of its own internal functioning, elements that can logically be traced back to it. In this way, almost anything can be brought back inside the system by being given its own niche, axiom, or representation within the spectacle. Against this Hegelian logic, one can counterpose a Situationist or Deleuzian logic of escape—the line that flees from the inside, the space that emerges outside or (as in Hakim Bey's constructions), becomes an outside; the new barbarians who do not speak the tongue of empire and come against it *as if* from outside, even if from its geographical centres—as the root of what a non-recuperated resistance involves.<sup>24</sup>

### *Working inside, thinking outside*

Which brings us back to the problem posed at the outset. When anarchists set up businesses, or engage in other activities taking advantage of the

mainstream structure or working through it, this is a variety of hybridity—it is a use of a hostile public discourse to spread ideas from a completely different, incompatible discourse. It appears different from more obvious examples (such as appearing in court, negotiating with the state, or forming a hush arbor or a heretical sect), because the context is one of permitted activity and the activity does not involve subterfuge, as it often does in other contexts. But it is structurally the same. The ambiguity that arises when, for instance, a pamphlet criticising the existence of money circulates for a monetary price is similar to the ambiguity that arises when, say, a reactive religious terminology is used to carry an active libidinal content. The moment, however, that an anarchist identifies this public-transcript activity as the goal (unconsciously, if not consciously), s/he endorses the public transcript and is recuperated. The point about a public transcript performance is that it is driven by the hidden transcript behind it, the transcript that cannot gain full expression in the public field except as insurrection – the hidden transcript always being a barbarian force, a force that does not speak the language of empire, that cannot be synthesised into the system. This force is sustained in potentially recuperative contexts by means of the distance between agent and performance. The loss of the distance separating the performance from the desire it serves is thus a loss of transformative energy, a recuperation.

It is by no means easy to tell if an initiative is recuperated or not, for while the conscious intent may be fairly obvious, the unconscious conversion of means into ends and tools into goals is something which can be discerned only indirectly. However, such unconscious intentionalities can often be deduced from the social relations an agent establishes in relation to a project. The actor's libidinal investments can tentatively be deduced backwards from their manifestation in social activity. In an activity valued for itself (thus, if hybrid, probably recuperated), the actor will tend to convert horizontal relations into vertical relations, to seek control over the activity, and to maintain it regardless of its usefulness or effects. The institution of the activity, its existence as a distinct social entity, is likely to be valued as a goal in itself and defended against the subversive potential of freedom. Hence, the orderliness, integrity and continuity of the activity or institution will be given a value over and above the flows it is meant (consciously at least) to serve, manifesting a different, reactive force that may be conscious-





ly disavowed but that can be discerned from the conversion of the activity into an institution and a spook.

The ethical outcome is that, to remain anarchist, an anarchist business operates as a means, as the tool of a flow leading out of the system, never as an end in itself. It may, in a certain sense, be working inside the system, using dominant forms and means; but it should remain outside on the level of intentionality and desire, never reducible to these forms and means, always treating them as strategic choices, as means to be used for a purpose and discarded should they fail to serve it. To be sure, the tightrope of the danger of recuperation is not taken away by conceiving it in such terms; one is still taking risks of recuperation by playing with the system's forms and means, though one is also taking this risk in a different way if one adopts a purist objection to any such play. While hierarchic institutions remain strong, it is not possible to take away the tightrope, the risk of recuperation; but it is possible to negotiate this risk in more or less creative ways, in ways that are more or less effective in sustaining the insurgent desire in exteriority. By keeping one's focus on the conscious and unconscious desires behind a project, one can minimise the dangers posed by recuperation and gain the strategic space for effective emancipatory practice.

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> See for instance Raoul Vaneigem, *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, chapter 12, <http://library.nothingness.org/articles/SI/en/display/42> and the recent application to single-issue campaigns in anon., "Give Up Activism," <http://www.eco-action.org/dod/no9/activism.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Larry Law, 'The Spectacle: A Skeleton Key,' London: *Spectacular Times* (no date).

<sup>3</sup> Take for instance the following: "Thus struggles against the alienation of wage labour must be recuperated by the left, represented by it, and rendered compatible with the continued objectification of the workers by capital accumulation. And during the period when the refusal of work was manifest, the primary role for revolutionaries was to attack such recuperation, to distinguish the working class as subject from its representation." *Aufheben*, "Kill or Chill? Analysis of the Opposition to the Criminal Justice Bill," part 1, "Sign of the Times: Monetarism, the Crisis of Representation, and the CJB," [http://www.geocities.com/aufheben2/auf\\_4\\_cjb.html#A](http://www.geocities.com/aufheben2/auf_4_cjb.html#A)

<sup>4</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, London: Continuum, 469-7; see also *Anti-Oedipus*, London: Athlone 1984, 240-62.

<sup>5</sup> "Uncontrollables," [http://www.geocities.com/kk\\_abacus/UNCON.HTM](http://www.geocities.com/kk_abacus/UNCON.HTM)

<sup>6</sup> Power in the sense of "power to," not "power over"—the ability to produce the effect one desires to produce.

<sup>7</sup> Not to be confused with a morality.

<sup>8</sup> See James C. Scott (1992), *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

<sup>9</sup> Raoul Vaneigem (1994), *The Movement of the Free Spirit*, New York: Zone.

<sup>10</sup> Erving Goffman (1961), *Asylums*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, p. 171.

<sup>11</sup> Homi Bhabha (1994), *The Location of Culture*, London: Routledge, p. 95.

<sup>12</sup> Bhabha p. 97.

<sup>13</sup> Alfredo Bonanno, "For an Anti-Authoritarian Insurrectionalist International," [http://www.geocities.com/kk\\_abacus/ioaa/insurint.html](http://www.geocities.com/kk_abacus/ioaa/insurint.html)

<sup>14</sup> Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) is a good example of a group straddling the line between radical demand as a means of survival and the construction of exterior agency as a means of resistance.

<sup>15</sup> See for instance, the following sample quotes from William E. Connolly, "Beyond Good and Evil," *Political Theory* 21:3, August 1993: 'it is often necessary to establish general policies' (383); 'Fortunately, there are still laws to restrain dogmatists from acting on these impulses' (388).

<sup>16</sup> William E. Connolly (1999), *Why I Am Not a Secularist*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota



Press, p. 37.

<sup>17</sup> Anthony Skillen (1993), *Ruling Illusions: Philosophy and the Social Order*, London: Ashgate.

<sup>18</sup> Colin Ward, *The Child in the City*, London: Bedford Square Press 1978/1990, pp. 89-90.

<sup>19</sup> Hakim Bey, "Waiting for the Revolution," <http://www.left-bank.org/bey/default2.htm>

<sup>20</sup> Nicholas P. Higgins (2004), *Understanding the Chiapas Rebellion: Modernist Visions and the Invisible Indian*, Austin: University of Texas Press.

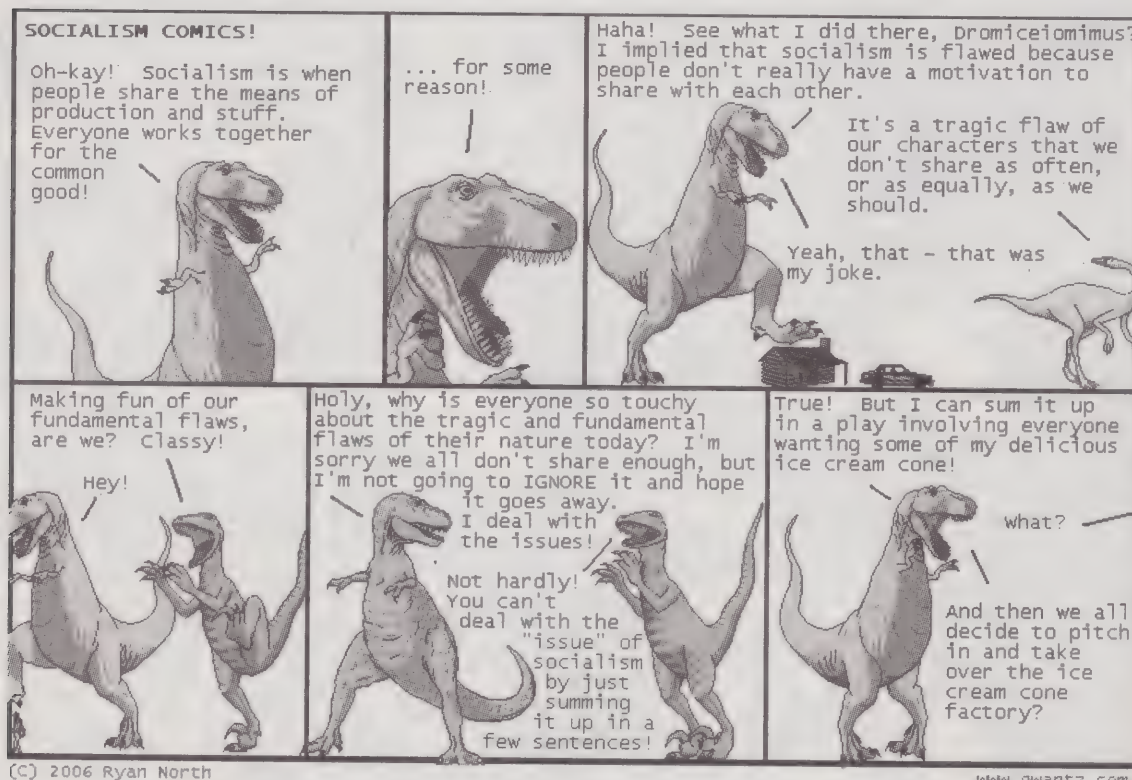
<sup>21</sup> See Higgins, chapter 4.

<sup>22</sup> See for instance Ramor Ryan, "A Carnival of Dreams and the Brazilian Left: A journey into the heart of the Amazon, denuded multitudes and a Zapatista *Encontro*," <http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/anarchism/writers/ramor/belem.html>

<sup>23</sup> "One of Hegel's peculiarities, that for which the shrewdest functionaries of domination should remember him with gratitude, consists in his understanding that unity—to which every form of power aspires—would appear invincible if, rather than basing itself on the

exclusion of the multiplicity—i.e., the opposition—it found its realization in the assimilation of the latter... [I]f this unity doesn't suppress the multiple, it doesn't realize it either, since it is limited to domesticating it in order to place it in the service of the initial thesis... Hegel was an important philosopher of recuperation: power becomes stronger if, rather than closing itself in its castle and putting dissidents to death—blind intolerance capable of fomenting social hatred—it welcomes their innovative ideas and even puts them partially into practice, after proper sterilization, with the aim of reinforcing its own legitimacy." Crisso and Odoteo, "Barbarians: The Disordered Insurgence," [http://www.geocities.com/kk\\_abacus/ioaa/barbarians.html](http://www.geocities.com/kk_abacus/ioaa/barbarians.html)

<sup>24</sup> "What Hegel, as an honest subject of the Prussian state, never takes into consideration is the possibility of a completely autonomous, sovereign, uncompromising opposition – a multiplicity that does not allow itself to be enrolled in any synthesis." Crisso and Odoteo, op cit.







Claudio Orso-Giacone



# Proudhon's Ghost:

## *petit-bourgeois anarchism, anarchist businesses, and the politics of effectiveness*

By Lawrence Jarach

When they're not busy murdering, ignoring, or desperately courting anarchists as comrades, Marxists frequently resort to dismissive and/or scurrilous accusations. One of the most enduring is the charge that anarchism in and of itself is a *petit-bourgeois*—they sometimes also add individualist here—ideology. Marx's correct analysis of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon's economic Mutualism as *petit-bourgeois* is the source of this dismissal; a nearly total absence of Proudhon's economic ideas among anarchists for the last 150 years, however, has made the continual use by Marxists of this century-old analysis seem silly.

In the meantime, and quite unfortunately, the spectacles of post-Seattle summit-hopping seem to have altered the expectations of our (until recently) reinvigorated anarchist milieu. How much time, effort, and energy did the activism of international travel, puppet making, and grant writing take away from the more mundane tasks of writing, distributing, and discussing anarchist theory and analysis, and then putting them into some kind of practice? The palpable lull in anarchist projects and activities, and an accompanying dearth of theoretical engagement among anarchists and other radicals interested in promoting and fomenting an anti-state and anti-capitalist future (to say nothing of such an engagement with the rest of the world), appears to be the result of this activist-driven exhaustion.

Within the past decade, occurring at the same time as this critical malaise (although certainly beginning earlier), and in the absence of trends to object to it specifically, we have witnessed an increasing influence of anarchist-run businesses, which has regenerated a factual foundation to the allegation that anarchism is *petit-bourgeois*. The centralization of commercial projects purporting to be anarchist has meant that most anarchists engage in the circulation of the printed material produced and distributed by those enterprises; the political agendas of most English-speaking/reading anarchists is thereby set—by others. General anarchist acquiescence to the predominance of these businesses as the defining projects of 21<sup>st</sup> century American anarchism cannot continue, that is if anarchists are to stake out and maintain an authentically anti-capitalist position.

### *Proudhon and Property*

Proudhon, the father of modern anarchism, was a fan of private property, but not the sort that generates capital

without labor. For Proudhon (as well as other socialists), real estate speculation, money lending at interest, and trading in stocks and bonds were considered unsavory because there was no actual physical work put into them. This is what he meant when he famously wrote "Property is Theft." Proudhon's People's Bank, along with the romanticized pastoralism of small-scale (cottage) industry and agriculture, were the hallmarks of his anti-statist social vision. Exchange of goods and services directly between the producers and consumers was to be the basis of a free and fair economy; prices or exchange values were to be negotiated and determined by the producers and consumers themselves without the interference of bankers, economic planners, or other experts and bureaucrats. That's what he meant when he less-famously wrote "Property is Liberty." Writing as Marx's contemporary in the mid-nineteenth century, Proudhon was reacting to the fitful implementation of industrialism and its accompanying process of proletarianization, finding fault with its centralizing and monopolizing tendencies. Marx and Engels (et al) found in that centralization the perfect mechanism for the creation of a self-conscious class, a revolutionary subject capable of expropriating the Means of Production once they (both the class and the means of production) became fully developed. Proudhon believed that the proletarianization of former peasants and ruined shopkeepers would only create a mass of alienated and submissive workers.

What is a *petit bourgeois*? In economic terms it refers to a small businessperson, someone who is either self-employed, works only with members of her/his family, or has a handful of employees; a shopkeeper. The *petit bourgeois* may hold the title to her store, but the bank holds the mortgage; the *petit bourgeois* may or may not dislike neo-liberal globalization, and may grumble about the injustice of monopoly capitalism, but this is only a complaint about a particular organization of capitalism—the *petit bourgeois* is still a capitalist, relying on the exchange of commodities for a profit, however small. In Marxist slang (because of the Marxist assertion that economic status determines one's socio-cultural ideology) it's also used to describe a certain mentality that accompanies the precarious and self-centered economic status of the person whose relationship to the oft-cited Means of Production is not the same as that of the big bourgeois (large landowner, banker, boss). In



The fact that there is anarchist content or an anarchist theme in printed material doesn't alter the relationship of author(s) to printer, or author(s) to readers, or printer to readers.

petit bourgeois will ultimately remain loyal to the regime of capitalism, private property, and the state.

The petit bourgeois is stereotypically small-minded, parochial, conformist, acquisitive, stingy, and easily swayed by demagoguery. Populism (characterized by anti-intellectualism; the scapegoating of easy/abstract targets; charismatic yet approachable leaders, and the promotion of small-scale capitalism) is often the typical expression of petit-bourgeois politics.

#### *Anarchist Property, Press, and Business*

For centuries, those who have sought to change society from below have relied on the pamphlet and the small journal as the primary means for making their ideas known to others. Anarchists are no exception to this tradition, and it continues today. Educational efforts have been the most stable and long-lasting anti-authoritarian projects compared to communal living, modern schools, and labor unions. Whether it's the anarchist bookstore or infoshop, a one-time pamphlet, a poster, or a periodical, anarchist

class terms, the bourgeois is in constant conflict with the proletarian; the petit bourgeois can take either side, but more often than not comes down against the proletarian as well. If the historical mission of the proletariat is to expropriate the private property and social wealth of capitalists, then the

publishing and the distribution and discussion of printed material has been the primary effort of most anarchists for the past 150 years; indeed, most anarchist organizations have centered their activities around the production and distribution of periodicals.

No anarchist ever made a living at writing anarchist material; given the pervasiveness of capitalist social relations, that is to be expected. Journals are lucky to break even, while most incur substantial debt (the vibrant French anarchist publishing scene in the period leading up to WWI was funded largely through the armed robberies of the so-called Bonnot Gang and the pre-revolution Spanish anarchist press and their educational centers—ateneos, the infoshops of their day—were kept afloat through the expropriations carried out by CNT militants). With the rise of postmodernism and the explosion of niche marketing, a shift occurred; along with the encouragement of passively consuming—rather than actively participating in—dissidence, anarchist and other radical publishing, in North America at least, began to be looked upon as something that could become more than a financial black hole.

The relationship of many producers of anarchist commodities to their consumers has by now become (if it ever had a different potential) the same as that of the more honest (!) capitalist entrepreneur: supplier of identifiable accessories, from black and red messenger bags, to banners, bumperstickers, and hoodies. The entrepreneur/petit bourgeois isn't attached to the specific content of the crap being flogged, so long as it brings in a profit at the end of the fiscal period.

The fact that there might be anarchist content or an anarchist theme in printed material doesn't alter the relationship of author(s) to printer, or author(s) to readers, or printer to readers. Brand-name anarchist accoutrements

are all commodities being offered for sale within the parameters of a market economy. The enterprises engaged in the production of these items as well as the venues (book fairs and others) are bound by the necessities of economic survival; unless the producers are financially solvent outside the project (and so are able to subsidize it), direct, non-monetary, exchange of goods with other producers can only occur on a limited basis—otherwise the project will certainly fail. The goal of being a self-sustaining (or profit-making) multi-title publisher in a competitive economy can only be real-





ized with an increasing monopoly on a desirable line of recognizable commodities; this is the petit-bourgeois wet dream. The economic imperative of the small business operator, to reinvest a percentage of profits in the project in order to expand the number and diversity of the products, operates without being called into question; if the goal is to get the Word out, get the Idea to more and more people, then success can only be measured using capitalist terms and logic, and no amount of protesting about the use of that logic, or the watering down of the message, can lessen this reliance on the tools of our exploiters.

Another, related, problem of having a business elite set our political agendas is the implicit proposition that all relevant theorizing and discussing of anti-state and anti-capitalist ideas has been completed—as if the Last Word of Anarchism were coterminous with the first words of Bakunin or Kropotkin, and that therefore the only task that remains is simply to sell as many books and pamphlets written by them as possible. The move by many writers (in books and journals, as well as on the internet) to quote Bakunin, and/or whoever else in the anarchist pantheon they wish to invoke as their favorite authority, is a reflection of this reluctance of our contemporary anti-intellectual comrades to bring anarchist ideas into the current century. Citing a famous published writer, as a means of ending debate, is an old authoritarian trick, unbecoming of anyone who adheres to a philosophy that celebrates independent thought. And we anarchists poke fun at the Marxists...

The first few San Francisco Bay Area Anarchist Book Fairs were places where commerce, trade (in the sense of direct non-monetary exchange), and socializing took place; a swap meet or flea market atmosphere made this annual event qualitatively different from just going into a store to shop. Most people offering merchandise more recently identify as vendors, looking at book fairs (and other events where printed material, t-shirts, tote bags, stickers, and other paraphernalia can be displayed) as purely mercantile events, where products and crafts are sold—not to comrades and friends in the course of conversation and unmediated interaction, but to anonymous consumers. These events have now become frenzies of niche market buying and selling, with consumers looking for the best deals while vendors look to entice more cash out of customers. Packaging has become more important

than content; quasi- or non-anarchist pamphlets and books are published and distributed (and more often than not the same items appear on more than one vendor table) that are geared not to a specifically anarchist (or anarchist-curious) readership, but to a generically left-liberal (and therefore more affluent) consumer base. Production and distribution decisions are made in purely economic terms; whatever items are offered that are not explicitly within the bounds of the business mission statement are explained as profit-generating items that allow for the production of those items that are supposed to fit, or at least fit better. So at



the display tables of anarchist vendors we are treated to the unabashed offerings of t-shirts with images of Che and books written by Leninists and other anti-anarchists. Contemporary anarchism apparently doesn't sell well to those interested in something more than product recognition, but the popular icons of statist rebellion apparently do just fine, which begs the question of who is actually buying this stuff. There are very few voices calling into question these unilateral, agenda-setting, business decisions; fewer still willing to insist that such decisions have real (mostly negative) consequences for the spread of anarchist ideas and practice—as opposed to Maoism hiding behind a circle-A, or red-and-black liberalism.

This combination of such questionable production decisions and the maintenance of the typical relationship of deliberate producer to passive consumer is what makes anarchist business practices particularly hard to swallow. After all, what difference does it make if the producer/proprietor offers goods that promote an anarchist theme if the context of its production and distribution is fully capitalist?

How have the business priorities, agendas, and decisions of the economic elite influenced the practices of the rest of



us? How much has written and graphic agitation been left to those who've literally cornered the market, leaving the actual actors relying, for the vital task of evaluation and analysis, on the published accounts of others?

### *Anarchist Effectiveness, Capitalist Logic*

There is an uncomfortable correlation between the desire to make anarchism (or anarchist ideas/projects/methods) more effective, and the pursuits of anarchist businesses.

There is an uncomfortable correlation between the desire to make anarchism practice more effective, and the pursuits of anarchist businesses.

can be truly anarchist, but that there's something fishy about a supposedly anti-capitalist project being successful (or effective) in capitalist terms. Are those who invoke effectiveness saying that they want anarchist ideas to be more popular? That they want more anarchists? That they want more groups to use anarchist organizational models and/or

businesses. Part of the logic is circular: spreading the ideas is often what prompts the anarchist entrepreneur to start a business in the first place. What effectiveness means in the case of anarchist projects remains unclear; that of anarchist businesses can only mean more income and/or profit. The point is not that only a cash-poor or in-debt project

decision-making processes? In business terms, effectiveness means bigger or more influential—a larger market share. How are we to understand this push for anarchists to be more effective or influential? More importantly, how are we to judge whether or not anarchists are being effective at all—let alone more effective? What criteria should be used to (attempt to) make such a determination?

According to many commentators, in times and places (revolutionary or not) where anarchists and anarchist ideas have had some kind of noticeable presence, our influence has extended beyond our numbers. While I would prefer this to be true, it is difficult—at best—to support such a statement with actual evidence. Does that extended influence become noticeable when non-anarchists use non-hierarchical organizational models? When non-anarchists organize themselves into affinity groups and/or networks? When non-anarchists use some kind of directly democratic or consensus-type decision-making process? When non-anarchists use black and red on their logos? When dead anarchists are made into non-anarchist martyrs?

A related concern is that anarchists break out of our sub-cultural ghettos. The language used in this argument centers on effectiveness as well. In an article published two years ago in *Northeastern Anarchist*, a NEFACKer commented that a time of the growth of infoshops and other small-scale anarchist projects was a depressing time “for anarchists.” After I questioned why the expansion of infoshops and related projects would be depressing for him, one of his supporters responded by asking about what “lasting contributions” such projects have made? This is





a fair question, but only if one is looking for a direct causal relationship between one's anarchist activities and the influence of those activities on a wider, non-anarchist, public. Even their influence on other anarchists and other anarchist projects would be an interesting piece of information.

Those who are concerned with such questions are as unable as the rest of us to determine how much actual effectiveness their projects and activities have. Perhaps they are judging by the number of new members of their particular groups. Perhaps they are judging by the number of periodicals printed and/or distributed. The late Murray Bookchin averred that the approximate circulation of a flyer and a journal he co-wrote in the late 1960s was an accurate determinant for his and his group's influence. The print run of this magazine has fluctuated between five and a little over six thousand for the past six years, but does this mean it actually reaches 5000 people? That's highly doubtful; using corporate distributors means that we accept corporate distributor returns (a depressingly large number). Clearly there are people we don't know who are often picking up, sometimes buying, rarely subscribing, but definitely reading AJODA. Plus this periodical has been around for a quarter of a century—long enough to have some kind of influence. But again, how are we supposed to determine what it is and how much comes directly from us?

There's a certain capitalist logic involved in trying to determine quantitatively this cause and effect relationship between anarchist projects and anarchist effectiveness. At the end of the day (or year, or decade—sorry for those without the patience to wait that long), they seem to say, how many units of social transformation have we accumulated in the revolutionary accounts? To paraphrase a long-time non-anarchist comrade, do (or can) these projects contain anything relevant to advancing the possibility of a large-scale movement for irreversible radical social change, or of relevance to anyone outside of a tiny subculture of people who like to call themselves anarchists?

Another fair question, but again, the actual data to help us make such a determination is sorely lacking; historically



speaking, influences are most often decided upon after the fact. It is after a revolution occurs that the causes are picked out. Fifty years of tireless and dangerous education and agitation by anarchists is put forward as one of the causes of the early successes of Spanish Revolution in 1936; military defeat is touted as a primary cause of the overthrow of Tsarism. But the vast array of influences are often murkier, more difficult to decipher, and—more topically for this discussion—impossible to predict. Who knows if the addition of ten (or twenty or a hundred) infoshops and micropower radio stations will hasten an irreversible movement of radical social transformation in the United States? Who knows whether or not two (or ten or twenty) annual anarchist conferences will help spread the ideas and practical projects of destroying the state and all other institutional hierarchies? The problem with such criticisms is that some critics have already determined that these projects are irrelevant and offer no lasting contributions—to their particular organizations and visions. But based on what criteria? No immediate causal results, no increased market share, no coverage outside marginal media?

#### *Anarchist Anti-Business, Anarchist Future*

No matter how hard some may try to insist otherwise, anarchist practice does not start with, and cannot be based on, the purchasing of the proper brand of commodities.

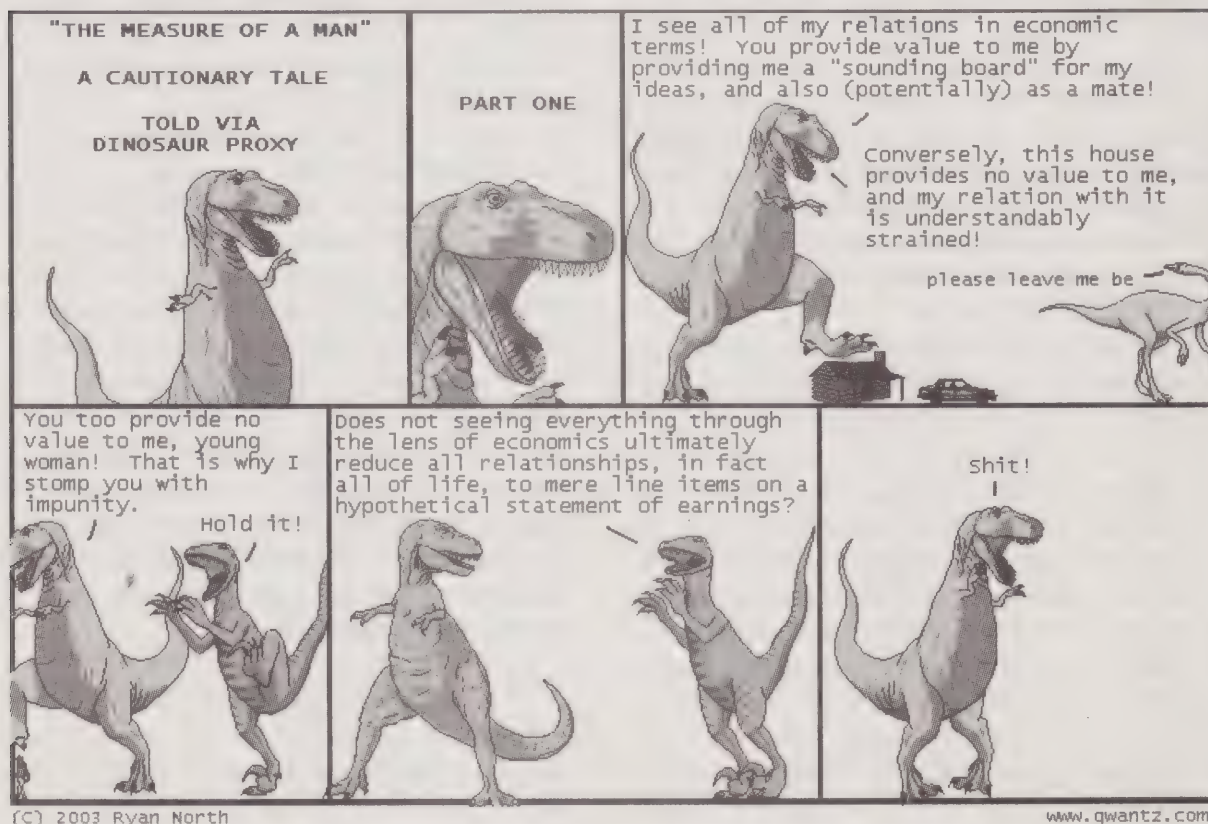


There's a certain capitalist logic involved in trying to determine quantitatively this cause and effect relationship between anarchist projects and anarchist effectiveness.

There have been, and continue to be, substantial achievements in getting anarchist ideas, theories, and practices to those curious about them. Independent and small presses have been an important source for much of the continued debate and refinement

and read, discuss, and devise plans—and where commodity exchange doesn't necessarily take place, and indeed is often actively discouraged—has been a largely positive example of (revived) anarchist practice. Internet discussion forums, conferences, study groups, the letters sections of periodicals, micropower radio, even the expansion of Food Not Bombs groups...for all their problems, these examples of expanding our day to day influence—if only on a limited scale—have also provided important commodity-free spaces, where the economic considerations of making a buck are completely ignored. The discovery, embrace, and celebration of egalitarianism, real affinity, friendships, solidarity, support networks, and empathic intimacy occur more easily where commodity exchange is absent, where relationships are not mediated by money or the creation and use of economic value, where commerce is absent and/or deliberately shunned. The basis of meaningful anarchist activity begins in these spaces. The maintenance and expansion of some kind of authentic revolutionary community and culture cannot be far behind.

All images by Claudio Orso-Giaccone





# Anarchist Media Review

Reviews this issue are by Aragorn! [A!], Dot Matrix [DM], and Matt Lucas [ML].

*Anarchy* does exchanges with all other anarchist and anti-state, anti-capitalist periodicals.  
We try to review all such periodicals received.

325 #3

325collective@hush.com  
60 pages, no price listed

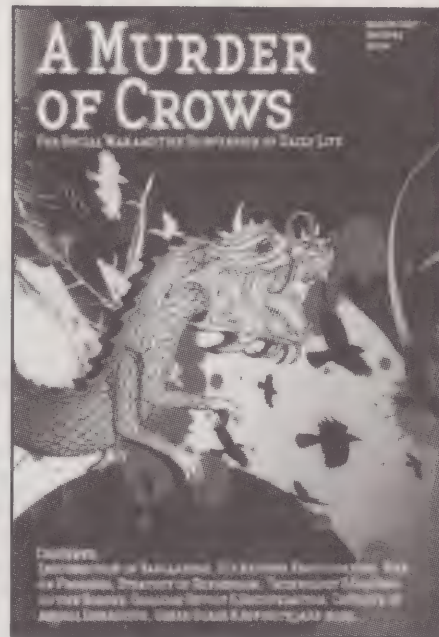
This is a lively, dense, and chaotic magazine from the UK that emphasizes direct action reports and prisoners rather than lengthy theoretical explorations of oppression. Many of these prisoners and issues aren't covered in North America particularly well, like Ruben & Ignasi in Barcelona, Garfield Gabbard (UK eco-anarchist prisoner who trashed a cop car and kicked the guard who tackled him), the Il Silvestre collective (Italian publishers of *Terra Selvaggia*), and Casey Hardison. Includes an interview with the French Direct Action (Action Directe) prisoner Jean Marc Rouillan (who remains refreshingly disillusioned with the system that has imprisoned him for 20 years).

There are good critical report backs from the anti-CPE struggle in France, information on the repression of the Czech-Teck 2004 festival, an anti-prison meeting in Barcelona (fall '05), and the Stirling Black Bloc 2005. This magazine is a great read of the events happening all over Western Europe and is of par-

ticular interest to anyone looking into international prisoner support. [A!]

**A Murder of Crows #2**  
PO Box 20442  
Seattle WA 98102  
56 pages, \$3

A magazine "for social war and the subversion of daily life" delivers its second issue and continues with an exceedingly clean presentation of (dare we say it?) insurrectionary anarchism. The cover is particularly striking, an image of a dragon and crows in striking black, blood red, and bright green. The editorial proclaims the far-reaching goals of this project, which include increasing communication between "those who seek to bury this system rather than reform it"; greater dialogue concerning methods of social struggle; critique of social institutions; and development of approaches to struggle informed by the current social context. The articles range from great report backs and criticism on struggles from Bangladesh, Oaxaca, Six Nations, and Italy. More thematic analysis include a few articles on



the current state repression on environmental activists and anarchists and on the technological apparatus of oppression understood apart from the "dumpster of ideology" on technology that evaluates the technological rationalization of the workplace and the border. The most critical article in this issue takes on the animal rights movement and veganism as incomplete evaluations of the real problem, which is (can you guess?) capitalism.

"The prison that is this society *must be destroyed* if we care to talk about freedom. The factory farm is but one location where we find its misery. This

system of exploitation profits from animal and human sweat and blood. It is *our* common enemy... Revolution is first and foremost a transformation of our interactions in the world—*qualitative* social transformation not quantified activist victories." (emphasis in original)[A!]

**A Wet Dream:  
to change the face of  
power**

By P. Gattaccio  
IEF Press  
Po Box 372  
Chapel Hill NC 27514  
37 pages, no price listed

Young anthropology student P. Gattaccio (lacking any interesting material on the !Kung and having spent the majority of the time in feminist groups or guiltily looking at Internet pornography) has graced us with a dumbed down dissertation on pornography. Gattaccio takes on the slow moving target of internet porn site SuicideGirls.com, trash-



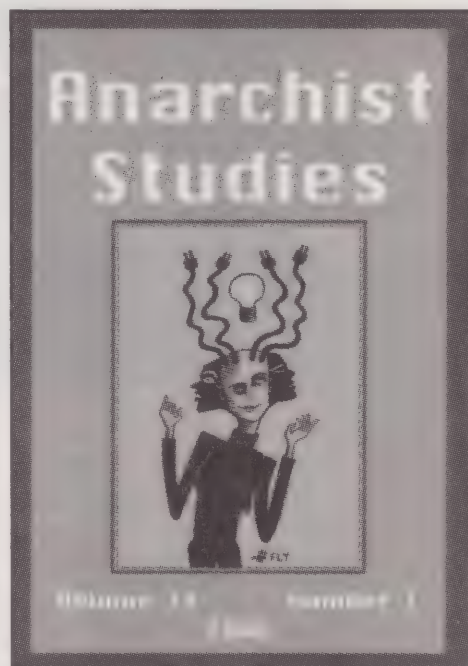
ing their capitalistic and non-collaborative mode of behavior. Instead the East Van Porn collective is presented as a model of behavior for their ability to make "sexy movies" after long, hard hours of meetings (the EVPC has made a documentary about their meetings that I'm sure will be a good mental flagellation for your sub during the next BDSM session). Our author builds up the essay to the usual academic anti-climax, stating that more hours should be spent studying pornography and more time should be spent doing ethnographic research. Not much of a money shot in my opinion. This zine lacks good images (the author was unwilling to take on the Institutional Review Board's ethical standards) and worthwhile content. Its title may interest a horny fifteen year old boy for ten seconds but the lack of boobies in the zine will probably make him toss it aside. [ML]

## Anarchist Studies

Vol 14 No 1 & No 2  
99a Wallis Road  
London E9 5LN  
192 pages, £10

*Anarchist Studies* continues to be one of the great contemporary anarchist periodicals. This issue demonstrates a trend that is lacking in North America: critical engage-

ment. The French anarchist periodical *Le Monde Libertaire* more or less came out in support of the French state's ban on religious symbols (read: veils) in schools and this issue of *Anarchist Studies* is a series of ten introductions, essays, responses, and afterwords on the topic. At the heart of the issue is a certain kind of anarchist calculus. What does an anarchist reject



first, the state or religion? Fascinating discussions that demonstrate how much better educated the Europeans are (with the caveat that most of these authors are hired intellectual thugs). There is also an etymological article on the Greek origin of the word *anarchy*, and a report on the decline of academic freedom in the US by an anarchist student.

Volume 14 No 2 is filled with critical reviews of the anarchist press including: *I Am Not A Man*, *I Am Dynamite!*, *The CNT in the Spanish Revolution*, *East End Jewish Radicals*, *The London Years*, and *Jumping the Line*. Additionally there are review articles on Harold Barclay and the anti-globalization movement. The featured articles include one on the modern CNT, the

post-structuralist anarchist resistance to the G-8, a sympathetic obituary of Murray Bookchin, and a debate between John Clark and Robert Graham about who misunderstands who more and who is more of a closet bureaucrat. [A!]

## Anarcho-Syndicalist

Review #45  
PO Box 42531  
Philadelphia PA 19101  
40 pages, \$4

This up-to-the-minute publication offers the gripping story of the 70th anniversary of the Spanish Revolution (the historical event that keeps on giving) and a defense of Emma Goldman from

an attack that appeared in the *International Socialist Review*, both by Iain McKay. Additionally an article about Wobblies in the Spanish Civil War, Solidarity Unionism (which is like regular unionism but with ultra-left rhetoric and microscopically small numbers), Venezuela, Sweden, Poland, and action reports from other syndicalists around the world. The most fascinating piece in this issue is actually a letter to the magazine and Iain McKay's response to it. The letter takes exception to the brusque treatment from Iain towards the book *Exquisite Rebel*, in his review of the three books on Voltairine de Cleyre that came out in the 2005-2006 period. *Exquisite Rebel* was edited by Sharon Presley & Crispin Sartwell, who are self-defined individualist-anarchists. Iain follows the class struggle line in his judgment of their book: "I am pissed-off by the attempts of right-wing individualists to appropriate the anarchist label for their ideas. This must be fought by anarchists, otherwise we may see repeated the fate 'libertarian' has befallen in America. The editors of *ER* are individualist-capitalist and not individualist-anarchists. Attempts to confuse the two should be resisted by all who cherish the anarchist tradition." [A!]



**Earth First!** March-April 2007  
PO Box 3023  
Tucson AZ 85702  
48 pages, \$4.50

This issue has the usual action reports including the tree sit in Berkeley (just down the road), the Fern Gully tree sit, the Desert Rock power plant resistance, Oaxaca, Guatemala, Honduras, Canadian Bison, wolves in the Northwest. Additionally there is a critique of the use of naked people by environmental organizations. There is a great interview with one of the editors of *Do or Die* and another with Jeff Hogg (who served six months on a contempt of court charge for refusing to talk to the Grand Jury). Finally is a review of Rod Coronado's writings, *Broken Arrows*. [A!]

**Fervent Whispers**  
info@ferventwhispers.org  
20 pages, no price listed

On the one hand I understand and respect an author's desire for anonymity. I understand that the current statist climate doesn't make it comfortable for anarchists to be public and, especially in the case of discussions and announcements of illegal action, that one's identity isn't necessarily relevant.

This project has a different goal. It is a series of intelligent, thoughtful, and personal reflections

on anarchist-identity, Marxism, activism, and revolution. Almost every article in this first issue begs a conversation: Why are you speaking in this voice? Who are you? What are your motivations? Especially for the articles that are written as first person accounts of circumstances, a dozen questions arise for every one that is answered.

Interesting project, but the authors have made it near impossible to engage with it. Modern olestra politics. Tastes good and passes right through. [A!]

**Fifth Estate #374**  
PO Box 201016,  
Ferndale, MI 48220  
56 pages. \$3

In many ways this *FE* is a refreshing change from the muddy graphics and sloppy writing of the recent past. It includes thoughtful and interesting articles on anarchist participation in immigrant and worker struggles, and thought-provoking pieces on dialectics and the model of environmental degradation. Aside from issues that could be minor in context, like a reformist article on how to address



disability (hint—rather than trying to normalize “disability,” let’s talk about problematizing “ability”), the amusingly self-promotional editorial that calls New York the center of intellectual anarchy (hint—“intellectual” is different from “academic”), and the fact that most of the articles were inadequately proof-read, I was pleased with this issue.

Until about half way through, when I got to the voting articles. There are two of them—the first about some long-term non-voter changing his mind in ‘06, and the second by anarchists in Venezuela refusing to vote for Chavez. The piece by Walker Lane on changing his mind for the 06 elections is a collection of the same half-assed arguments that most of us have heard a million times, even down

to the line that “welfare mothers want you to vote.” All this article proves is that Lane doesn’t really understand the point of not voting. He mentions hearing about one woman (in that craaaazy San Francisco area) who didn’t vote in the last election. Let’s just say that this is an indication of little more than who his friends are. The fact that this article is immediately followed by one against Chavez (by people who do seem to understand

the purpose of not participating in the state spectacle) is heartening. Maybe Lane thinks that the gulf between Democrats and Republicans isn’t as wide as between Chavez and the genocidal regime associated with Chavez’s rival. Or maybe the message is that non-voting has joined the list of non-pacifist behaviors that are too dangerous for US citizens to do, but that we can still applaud when radicals in other countries do them. And then there’s the article on gender issues at Burning Man, which is another addition to *FE*’s list of celebrating so-called empowering or liberatory events that are really just the newest brand of white middle class vacation.

All in all, aside from graphically (looks-wise this issue is leaps ahead



of recent efforts) #374 maintains the spotty tradition that has become *FE*'s. There are some (slightly more than normal) worthwhile articles, and there are some (slightly fewer this time) embarrassments. I just wish the embarrassments didn't make up in silliness what they lack in number. [DM]

**Fifth Estate** #375  
PO Box 201016  
Ferndale, MI 48220  
56 pages, \$3

Since the issue that was produced in New York, and perhaps since the dropping of "anarchist" from the cover, the rise of Autonomous Marxist content is apparent in *Fifth Estate*. Perhaps this is a good thing since it provides thought-provoking fiber to the often times sickly sweet stories of protest, art, and country-living. This issue looks fantastic, very professional and clean. The internal color pages are well chosen and attractive, especially the banned mural from Sechelt BC.

Among the good-to-great content in this issue is the reprint from *Troploin* on religion, Shukaitis's article on autonomists, "Fires without Commentary" by Charles Reeve, Peter Lamborn Wilson's obituary of Robert Anton



Wilson, and John Clark's obituary of Helen Hill.

Among the lousy content is the one page of reprint (with a one page introduction) honoring the 40th Anniversary of Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle*. Talk about a decision made by committee! The article by Roger Farr on slang is bewildering, not for its content, which would barely qualify as a submission to an English 201 course ("Write an article about how language changes and how that is radical"), but because of the introduction that confuses an editorial from *AJODA* (calling for clearer language from anarchists) with having "something in common with the masters of this society, who also see slang and cant as a threat to the discursive regime."

Finally it is worth

mentioning that *FE* is one of three anarchist periodicals reviewed here that decided to reprint a piece of the prole. info pamphlet *Abolish Restaurants*. What is striking about the *FE* reprint is that it actually does *not* honor the beautiful line art of AR but instead reprints it as another 3000

word essay to trudge through, using the AR artwork as only clip art. If it weren't sad it would be funny. [A!]

**Freedom** Vol 68 No 7  
84b Whitechapel High Street  
London E1 7QX  
8 pages, 80p

This issue of *Freedom* includes longer articles about the connection between deforestation in SE Asia with the rise in consumption of bio-fuels, the resistance to a Shell pipeline in Ireland, and a long review of anarcho-punk (*The Story of Crass, The Day the Country Died*). In addition, this issue has shorter pieces about Zimbabwe, Copenhagen, the police, and prisoners. [A!]

## I, Objector: a conscientious objection to voting

Anonymous  
Madison Infoshop  
[www.madisoninfoshop.org](http://www.madisoninfoshop.org)  
no price listed. 17 pages

This is a small, opinionated, and legible (!) zine on convincing (American) people not to vote.

A few of the arguments are activistic ("don't vote, organize!"), and others refute not-particularly-sophisticated points—along the lines of "when you step into a voting booth once every four years and feel as if you've done your part..." (Few pro-voting folks would argue for voting as the only action people should take.)

But most of it, while brief, is quite to the point—touching on many of the assumptions involved in voting, challenging the idea that the US system (of democracy) must be the best system, confronting the implicit and explicit accusations against non-voters, etc. Toward the end it becomes especially relevant: "The very process of voting is damaging to society. It breeds minds closed to alternatives..."

It's too bad that so many anarchists, even ones you think would know better, apparently could stand to read this mini-pamphlet. [DM]



## Identity Politics and White Activism

Anonymous  
Madison Infoshop  
www.madisoninfoshop.org  
11 pages. No price listed.

This zine is composed of four very short pieces: one each from the Black (female), Gay (male), and Female (white?) perspectives, and a concluding piece for white boys (straight?) that aims to correct egregious behavior. It's hard not to be charmed by the anger in these pieces on identity. All of them make valid points about, for example, paying attention and not making certain kinds of assumptions... but the essentialism is distracting and aggravating. Especially the ending pages (on how to act right), which don't even have the validity of a personal story. While I read it, I considered the straight white boys I've been in groups with, the ones who display the most obnoxious, interruptive, know-it-all behavior, and I knew that were they to be confronted with this list (and if they took it seriously), it would only encourage them to get more defensive. Because these kinds of corrective polemics don't work on the behavioral level that they're aimed at, they're more for training identity-politics aficionados in the correct rhetoric and tactics—which generally also don't work (at least not to change other people's behavior). [DM]

**Maximum Rock N Roll**  
#289, June 2007  
PO Box 460760  
SF CA 94146-0760.  
144 pages. \$4

*MRR* is a long running newsprint magazine that has graced the floors, bathrooms and dirty bedrooms of punk kids across the world. This issue contains the usual (inter)national scene reports, record and zine reviews, columns, and including an amusing interview with Isa Chandra Moskowitz of *Vegan with a Vengeance* cookbook fame.

It also contains a column by Lefty Hooligan, who called himself "an anarchist for fifteen years from 1969 to 1984, having participated in my first riot in 1971..." (How's that for credentials? Huzzah!) Lefty brings down the philosopher's hammer on anarchists in general, turning his column into yet another anti-anarchist screed. Lefty is hardest on the BASTARDS (Berkeley Anarchist Students for Theory And Research/Development) for allowing infamous anarchist (and asshole) Bob Black to speak at a conference some years ago. The BASTARDS and their "puerile nihilism" are a fine example for Hooligan to contend "that anarchism in general fails to grasp the importance of principled praxis... this flaw also contributed to anarchists weak-

ing havoc in a working class neighborhood in the name of working class solidarity." Ouch. Perhaps if anarchists had more principles we would finally succeed. Well it's back to the Ten Commandments for us! [ML]

## The Next Train

Anonymous  
Madison Infoshop  
www.madisoninfoshop.org  
6 pages. No price listed.

An argument for the wonderfulness of travelers that starts out with the remarkable comparison of traveling kids (mostly white and middle class) with oppressed people: Gypsies, immigrants, migrant workers, and "inner city residents" (because they're all accused of being leeches and smelling bad). And that's just in the first paragraph.

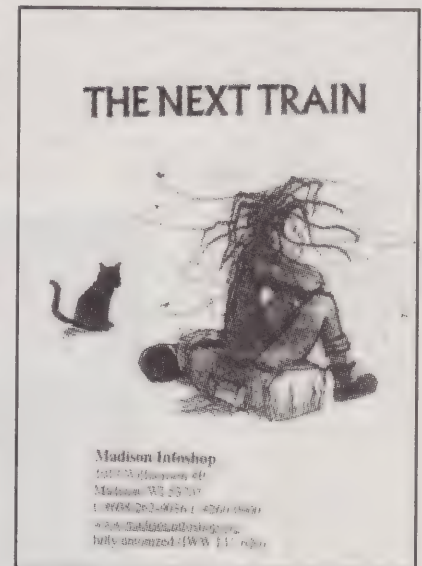
In the second paragraph, there is a line drawn from hostility against travelers to the hostility of sedentary people for nomadic people (anthropologically speaking).

It then goes on to paint a simplistic and rosy picture of kids descending on a crisis situation of the Oneida people in upstate New York. Doesn't take much reading between the lines to consider that there might be another per-

spective on *that* story.

This was a reprint from *Anarchy in the Age of Dinosaurs*, and while I wasn't going to review any of the reprints that came from the Madison Infoshop (of which there were several, from Emma Goldman to Marine General Smedley Butler) I started reading this and was so amused by the arrogance, obliviousness, and ahistoricism (did you know that Bakunin and barnstorming Emma Goldman were travelers?), that I couldn't resist sharing.

Of course there are good things about people traveling around. But this attempt at an apologia is an embarrassment. [DM]





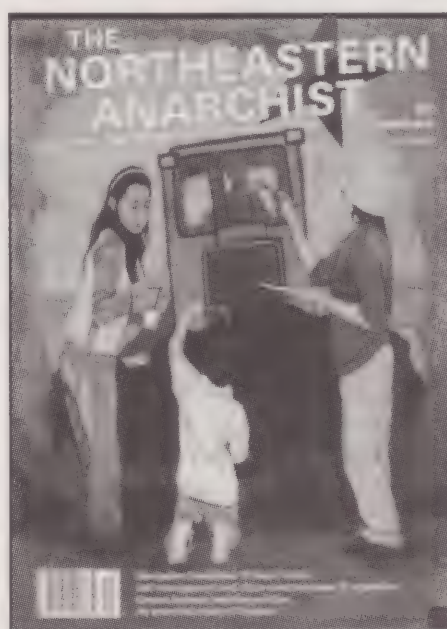


**The New York Rat #7**  
 newyorkrat@riseup.net  
 12 pages, free

This is the issue of the *NY Rat* that honors Brad Will, a NYC based videographer who was killed by a paramilitary during the Oaxaca revolt. Mostly this issue is comprised of personal reflections by his friends and analysis of the situation in Oaxaca. Every community should honor their fallen this thoughtfully. Additionally *NY Rat* continues to be a good anarchist newspaper and includes information on the Green Scare (Daniel McGowan is from NYC and is well represented here), the "nights of rage" in France, how to cop watch, events in NYC, and the NYC Black Pages of places of interest for anarchists/radicals in the area. One day I'd like to produce a paper like this: local with eyes on the outside world. [A!]

**The Northeastern Anarchist #12**  
 PO Box 230685  
 Boston MA 02123  
 56 pages, \$4

This issue of *NEA* is quite attractive. The cover is a clever collage of apparent muralists painting a bulldozer. Even the back cover, which portrays the global reach of NEFAC through an orbital photograph of the eastern side of this continent, is quite striking. This issue



is a great departure, aesthetically, from the last one—but for all its shine it begs the question of its motivation. With a bar code and glossy cover, the magazine appears ready for the newsstand but the narrow content focus of the magazine (being regional and reflecting the increasingly narrow activities of NEFAC itself) would make the magazine a hard sell in easier times for the magazine industry.

This issue includes an evaluation of the Montpelier Downtown Workers Union (a geographically focused union of workers in Central Vermont) that might interest a reader who is curious about union organizing in the service sector; a translation of a French critique of anarchists and the Popular Front (that is only about half as interesting as it could be, since it is filled with acronyms and grueling details of political splits and new amalgamations); a look at solidarity with the recent Six Nations resistance; a tribute to Bookchin; and book reviews of *The Magón Reader*, *The Black Power Movement*, and the new version of *Olive Drab Rebels*.

By far the most fascinating article in this issue of *NEA* is Flint's lengthy anthropological "anarchist study of the Iroquois polity" that, while partially about justifying the possibility of urban

egalitarian society (sure to infuriate many), is largely a respectful treatment of the Rotinoshón: ni nations of the Lake Ontario area.

Finally, this issue of *NEA* is another of the three anarchist publications reviewed in this issue that inexplicably reprints generously from prole.info's *Abolish Restaurants*. [A!]

**OysterCatcher #4**  
 RS A-4062 Wren Road  
 Denman Island, BC  
 V0R 1T0 Canada  
 32 pages, \$3 Can/\$4 US/\$5 Intl

Poems. Many poems.

Ron Sakolsky is a fine writer. Even—or especially—his fiction is readable and lovingly pointed at the expected targets. *OysterCatcher* serves as part chapbook, part group collection, and gives yet another peek at the mystery called Denman Island, BC. Beyond the poetry (by Sakolsky, Bob Sarti, Sheila Nopper, and Monte Merrick) are articles on the coal miner's strike of 1912, a Yippie's reflection on the past 37 years, a story about the Green Scare, Green Hermeticism, and the IWW of the sixties. Finally an article by Wolfi, "Stronger Wine, Madder Music," extols the virtues of wine and dance and decries the new puritanism of anarchists who don't extol the virtues of wine and dance. [A!]



**Rolling Thunder #3 & #4**  
PO Box 2133  
Greensboro, NC 27402  
112 & 104 pages,  
\$5 each

CrimethInc. would like to have it both ways. On the one hand they present themselves as something (a movement?) independent from the anarchist milieu that they spring from (which tells you what about the class composition of many of their writers?). On the other they actually pay very close attention to how they are portrayed by others and for the first time ever, actually sink to same depths that they claim to find infuriating in others.

Issue #3 features the article "The Fine Art of Criticism: A How-To Guide for Aspiring Journalists," in which they say exactly what they think of their reviewers: "Those who can, write; those who can't, write reviews. Writing reviews is the surest shortcut to a sensation of power for those who lack the dedication necessary to create something of actual worth." Isn't that precious... When I think of the positive and negative return (in the form of feedback and interest) on the writing I have done, this analysis is exactly wrong, but reversed. Reviews are necessary drudgery for a writer (of the review) but needed generally—if anyone outside of the reviewed writer's circle of friends is ever going to hear about what the reviewed writer

has to say. This article then lists perceived slights of CrimethInc. material (as if anyone but the reviewer—and the author—in question will have much of an idea about what they are talking about or how outrageous their claims of misrepresentation are). Ironically *RT* has started to review other material in this issue.

Recent issues of *RT* are beautiful. This magazine is, hands down, the most attractive publication around, better looking than anything on the newsstand (it helps that they have no ads, of course). They spare no expense in the production including (for issue #4) a back cover reproduction of the Titanic that includes selective glossy coating, leading the eye to believe that the image has cut-and-paste bits of paper taped to it. Additionally #4 has no fewer than eight full color pages inside it (not counting the cover).

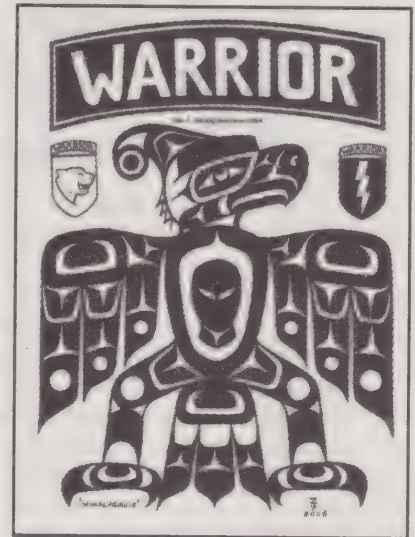
Tragically, the consistency of the content does not mirror the consistency of the look. *RT* does publish interesting articles, apparently written by the central hivemind of CrimethInc., about topics ranging from dreams, repression and strategies of response, Prometheus, infiltrators, and CrimethInc.'s Shareholder Report of their ten years of activity which is a must-read.

Additionally, the graphic storytelling in each issue is top notch (a graphical

version of Big Rock Candy Mountain in #4 and a travelogue through Barcelona in #3). *RT* also reprinted a section of prole.info's *Abolish Restaurants* (but at least they chose a different section than *NEA*). Finally the interview with graffiti artist Bork, the story of the squat in Bufalo, and the article from an anonymous professional journalist are all excellent, interesting, and compelling.

What is less compelling is the apparent reclamation by CrimethInc. of activism-without-the-word where they cherry-pick the way that they represent the exact same kind of activism that anarchists (including CrimethInc.) have been critical of for years. In these two issues are glamorizations of the occupations in Oaxaca, the South Central Farm in LA, the anti-CPE protests in France, the Tomato Pickers struggle, the Really Really Free Market, and summit hopping. The criticism of activism has never been that you cannot have life-fulfilling growth experiences doing it. The criticisms of activism include: often times doing *something* is actually worse (from a variety of different perspectives) than doing nothing (which appears to be where the disconnect is); that working with politicians guarantees politi-

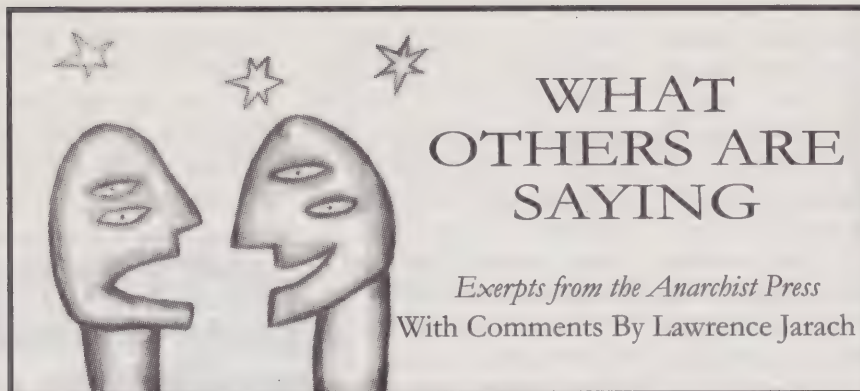
cal (read: compromised, alienated, and partial) solutions even if no one "on the ground" wants that, and that adrenaline is mainly a food group for the young. [A!]



**Warrior #1**  
Warrior Publications  
warrior-publications@  
hotmail.com  
24 pages, no price listed

*Warrior* is not an easy read. It is a beautiful magazine of images lovingly crafted by Zig Zag offered as supplements to the horrific story of genocide in British Columbia. It is the story of the war called colonization on the stolen land (never ceded to the British or Canadians by treaty) in southwest Canada. It is the tale of indigenous resistance and a cry against assimilation (whether by the screen or the bottle). Like most of Zig Zag's publications, this is a powerful statement that may be heavy handed but requires a close read. [A!]





*A Survey of the US Anarchist Movement* by Peter Gelderloos

"Given the immense obstacles us anarchists, as subjects of the most powerful empire in world history, face in trying to overcome the state and create a world free of capitalism and coercive hierarchies, it is little wonder that many anarchists wait for revolution as though it were the lottery, or something else beyond our influence. However, there are many actions that today's anarchists can take, and do take, that have a measurable impact on our ability to effectively influence our community, build alliances, attract new people to anarchism, create immediate change, and survive government repression.

In an attempt to ascertain some of the strengths and weaknesses of the US anarchist movement, and to encourage similar efforts of strategic self-evaluation, I surveyed a dozen other anarchists. Hopefully, this survey, and further analysis, will clarify some of the concrete weaknesses of the anarchist movement, and help us avoid one another's mistakes and replicate one another's successes.

Because of the small sample that participated in this survey, the results should not be construed as anywhere near representative of the entire US anarchist movement..."

Gelderloos talks to twelve of his comrades, and thousands of the rest of us are supposed to glean something important about ourselves and our milieu from this highly (to say the least) unrandom sampling? The editors at *Social Anarchism* took this seriously as a piece of authentic research? It's one thing to address what Gelderloos sees

as the mistakes and successes among American anarchists—even just mid-Atlantic American anarchists—and then discuss what may be the salient features of the problems anarchists in general face. But to put those analyses into a sociological framework (with demographics broken down into percentages) is misleading at best. On top of all that, to call the result "A Survey of the US Anarchist Movement," as if his findings were indicative of something beyond the small circle of his closest political associates, is just embarrassing.

Speaking of a dozen, the editors offer a (baker's) dozen questions for a new section of the magazine called "Anarchists Write." Excerpts:

"Is there something positive in popular culture? How do we shift from oil to alternative fuels? Do anarchists have anything to say about race and ethnic relations? Can you be an anarchist and still work at straight jobs? Are you worried about creeping fascism? What do you see as the fundamental differences between anarchists and Marxists today? Do we need an anarchist presence in the academy? In the labor unions? What about a "long march through the institutions"?"

Some of the questions are neutral, some are pointed, some reveal an unfortunate cluelessness, and one or two are obnoxiously self-serving.

**Social Anarchism #40**  
2743 Maryland Ave  
Baltimore MD 21218



*Anarchists in the Italian Factory Occupations* by Iain McKay

"...it is surprising that some claim Italian fascism was a product or form of syndicalism. This is even claimed by some anarchists. According to Bob Black, the 'Italian syndicalists mostly went over to Fascism,' referencing David D. Roberts' 1979 study *The Syndicalist Tradition and Italian Fascism* to support his claim...

Looking at Black's reference we discover that, in fact, most of the Italian syndicalists did not go over to fascism, if by syndicalists we mean members of the USI (the Italian Syndicalist Union)...

In other words, the Italian syndicalists who turned to fascism were, firstly, a small minority of intellectuals who could not convince the majority...and, secondly, Marxists and republicans rather than anarchists, anarcho-syndicalists or even revolutionary syndicalists."

Editors' Note: In addition to his misrepresentation of sources, discussed above, we feel compelled to remind readers that Bob Black has a well-documented history of serving as a police informer, snitching on people with whom he has had personal and political disputes. The willingness of some "anarchist" publications to publish this police informer's scribbles defies rational explanation.

In a remarkable combination of sleight of pen/keyboard and bait-and-switch, McKay manages to impute something to both Black and Roberts that neither of them said. Nowhere in either *Anarchy After Leftism* or *The Syndicalist Tradition*... do Black or Roberts equate syndicalists with "members of the USI." For McKay, only real syndicalists join anarcho-syndicalist unions—not intellectuals, Marxists, republicans, or the unaffiliated. I confess I can't tell the difference between a Marxist syndicalist, an intellectual syndicalist, a republican syndicalist, a regular old syndicalist, and an anarcho-syndicalist in terms of what they do when they're in a union, regardless of whether that union is nominally anarcho or not.

When throwing around accusations or informing, it's important not to



forget that that ASR co-editor Jon Beken once threatened to take independent publisher Autonomedia to court for libel; his pre-trial settlement offer included a cut of their (presumed) profits from the offending title. But since he merely threatened to sue and didn't actually contact the police I guess that's perfectly acceptable. Deliberately setting out to involve any arm of the state in interpersonal disputes (if that's what they are) is nasty to be sure, but that old glass house metaphor seems especially apt here.

As for the snide reference to this journal being "anarchist" rather than anarchist, we return to the inappropriate and authoritarian use of quotation marks to indicate what the author(s) consider irony. In this case, it's also an explicitly sectarian jab; the editors of *Anarcho-Syndicalist Review* have the arrogance to reserve for themselves the exclusive ability to determine the authenticity of what constitutes a legitimate anarchist publication. It would be interesting to see their complete list of acceptable and unacceptable (anarchist and "anarchist") publications, projects, and individuals, as well as the reasons—all, no doubt, overflowing with "rational explanations."

**Anarcho-Syndicalist Review #46**  
PO Box 42531  
Philadelphia PA 19101



*Reportback: Challenging Oppression Within at the 2007 Earth First! Organizers' Conference and Winter Gathering* by Clara

"Don't become an anarchist!" a friend of mine said, warning me that the anarchist subculture was 'inherently racist and sexist.' I began to wonder if just associating myself with the Earth First! movement was weakening my resistance to these forms of oppression, especially when those who expressed the most concern were my friends of color.

...I grew more hopeful...learning that *Challenging Oppression Within* (COW) would be facilitating a 'confronting sexual assault' workshop... The workshop had been a condition set by our hosts, the Rhi-

zome Collective [Austin, Texas], in order to address Earth First!'s reputation as a mostly white male movement oblivious of privilege.

...members of COW want the caucus to have a presence at all gatherings, offering support and resources for fighting oppression..."

The irony of a behavior-modification pressure group—oops, I mean "caucus"—outside EF! having the acronym of the traditionally most loathed domesticated animal in the (original) EF! universe is too good not to point out.

That the Rhizome Collective extorted the EF! organizers into making a space for COW was apparently not seen as a problem. Then this "caucus" of outsider anti-oppression behavior-modification bullies is to have a continual presence at EF! gatherings, generously offering their "support and resources" for doing what they do. Yee-haw.

#### **Earth First!; The Radical Environmental Journal**

Beltane May-June 2007  
PO Box 3023  
Tucson AZ 85702



*Living My Life: A Tale of Blood, Sweat, and Anarchy* Interview with Robin Isaacs

"Many anarchists seem to think that all they have to do is preach the word of anarchy, and everyone will flock to our doorstep..."

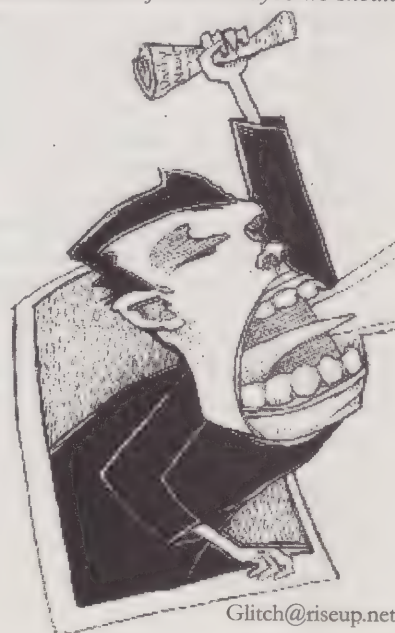
People of colour rightly want to know what anarchism has to offer them. But all our comrades seem to be able to offer is the anarchist gospel... why wouldn't people of colour be alienated by white people taking an approach like this? It's just more of the same—white people telling people of colour what to think and what not to think...

In recent years, I have been heartened to see the formation of a specifically anarchist people of colour network, which has arisen both to advance the struggles of people of colour in anarchist ways and as a re-

action to the racism within the historically very white-dominated anarchist movement in Canada and the US.

In terms of how white anarchists can concretely relate to movements of people of colour, I think it is important that we make contributions where we can, but also avoid pretending that we have all the answers to how people should fight for their struggles. If a white anarchist wants to contribute to the struggles of a racialized community organization, then I would suggest that they approach the group and say, 'I want to support your struggle any way I can. Give me some work to do.' And you do work, any work—sweeping floors, licking envelopes, anything you can get, no matter how menial. And you work hard, harder than anyone else, and longer hours, too. And you don't mention you're an anarchist, not yet. For now, you shut up about that. And no matter how much work you do, you always offer to do more, to work harder, and for longer hours. And when you build up some credibility with them, you wait for the conversation to turn to politics.

You don't bring it up yourself; you don't preach. You wait for them to bring up the subject, and then—and only then—do you mention that you are an anarchist. And when they see how hard you work, and they know you're an anarchist, then maybe they'll begin to wonder, 'Well, if this white guy works so damned hard for us, and he's an anarchist, maybe there's something to this anarchism after all. Maybe we should



Glitch@riseup.net



*ask him about it.' And this is one way that white anarchists can start to build better relationships with the struggles of people of color."*

This craven obsequiousness and voluntarily imposed servitude is surely nauseating to anyone with more than a gram of dignity and self-respect (reminds me of some of the stories coming out of the Challenging White Supremacy cult). If it's alienating and humiliating to accept wages for our labor, how should we describe it when someone does it for free—and for longer hours—because of the guilt they feel about the existence of racism? Accepting assigned tasks (menial or not) and working for others this way cannot possibly be an effective method of getting them to respect you and/or your politics—especially when you have deliberately hidden (lied about?) the whole reason for slaving in the first place. I am in favor of respecting others enough not to hide my political ideas, only to mention them later as if they were some exclusively private or incidental matter. Anarchy does not require all people to be anarchists, so I have little interest in converting the ignorant; despite his warning against preaching, Isaacs's promotion of this strategy sounds too much like that of a missionary among benighted natives. He further ignores the possibility of an explicitly anarchist group or collective entering into a collaborative relationship with people of color; all he seems willing to offer is a personal strategy for infiltration and manipulation. Of course, there's nothing racist about assuming that these mythical people of color just aren't sophisticated enough to discover anarchist ideas on their own, that they need some sneaky boot-licking white boy to ingratiate himself into their struggles of licking envelopes to bring them the message of what anarchism has to offer. Those envelopes are sure to have a bitter aftertaste.

**Upping The Anti #4**  
998 Bloor St. West  
PO Box 10571  
Toronto Ontario M6H 4H9  
Canada



## The Egoist Encyclopedia

by Wolfi Landstreicher

As an egoist, obviously, I have no desire to be ruled. And considering the obligations involved, I would also never want to rule. With this in mind, it should come as no surprise that I, like most egoists, am an anarchist. But what does this mean. What is anarchism? What is anarchy?

In recent years, there has been a trend in certain anarchist circles to reject the term "anarchism." This stems from a kind of lazy, quasi-magical thinking that ascribes special powers to certain words or even syllables, so that their mere presence or absence can transform reality. Anarchism is automatically seen as an ideology simply because of the "ism" at the end. By replacing this "ism" with a "y," far too many anarchists think that they have magically freed themselves from ideology. In fact, they have simply added to the trend of reducing and impoverishing language. I find both

words—anarchism and anarchy—far too useful to give up either one in the name of some "anti-ideology" ideology. Yet another (real) effort, my friends...

Etymologically, anarchism and anarchy come from a Greek word meaning "no ruler." In their modern usage, this meaning is expanded to recognize that rule and authority have developed complex institutional forms which increase social control, and thus domination, while at the same time lessening the power of any single individual to rule. So anarchism and anarchy now refer not just to the absence of a ruler, but to the absence of rule, of authority, as such.

For me, the word anarchism refers to the history and the theoretical and practical development of all of those who have consciously pursued the destruction of all rule and authority and the creation of a world in which all individuals are free to create their lives as they desire. The term is useful because it points out that this pursuit has been conscious and has involved specific interrelationships and influences among those involved, which has led to a flowering of ideas and practices that can critically interact and sharpen our capacities for carrying on this pursuit.

It is possible to find ideas, events, and movements throughout the history of rule that have opposed it. But before the 19th century, they tended to be far-flung in space and time without the means to bridge the gaps easily. This is why anarchism is usually traced back to the early 19th century when certain socialists began to see the destruction of the state and all forms of authority as essential to the radical social transformation they desired and fought for.

One of the first people to call himself an anarchist was Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, and France was the source of some of the earliest anarchist revolutionaries and thinkers.



It was probably also where Bakunin first encountered anarchist ideas. The ideas quickly attracted the interest of rebels throughout and beyond Europe. Both Spain and Italy developed strong anarchist movements with a flourishing of ideas and practices in many directions.

And of course, I wouldn't want to forget Max Stirner, whose book *The Ego and Its Own* was perhaps the first anti-authoritarian critique of ideology. Though Stirner is not known to have ever called himself an anarchist, his rejection of the state, law, private and collective property, religion, and every form of external and internal authority was to influence a wide spectrum of anarchists from Emma Goldman to Renzo Novatore, from Benjamin Tucker to the Bonnot Gang. But his real importance has been to guarantee that there has always been at least a tiny amoralist, truly anti-ideological, thread in the fabric of anarchist development, a gadfly to harass and (when possible) counteract the tendency to create anarchist moralities, anarchist rules; an anarchism of easy answers and guarantees.

It isn't my intent here to go on with a detailed history of anarchism. But if we can recognize that the various trends within anarchist thought and practice today all reflect extensions of and responses to what anarchists have said and done in the past, we suddenly find that we have a whole theoretical arsenal at our disposal: critiques of civilization from Joseph Déjacque, Ernest Coeurderoy and Frank Brand (Enrico Arrigoni); critiques of organizationalism from Luigi Galleani and Giuseppi Ciancabilla; critiques of moralism from Renzo Novatore and Bruno Filippi; critiques of politics, industrialism, etc. The fact

that these ideas have been developing within anarchist circles for so long is not interesting because it gives those of us with similar ideas a heritage, but because it offers us more tools, weapons, and toys for developing our ideas and practices. Only an ideologue would give up such a treasure chest, free for the looting.

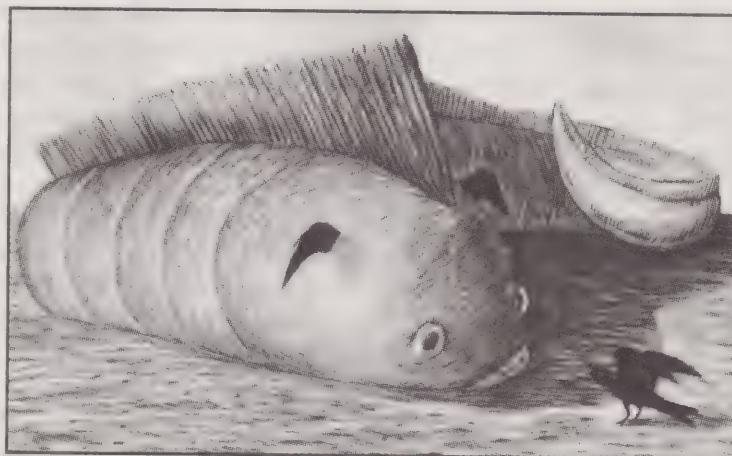
If anarchism refers to the history and theoretical and practical development of the conscious struggle to destroy all rule then, anarchy describes a situation where there is no rule, where the accumulation of power does not exist, has broken down, or has been destroyed. Anarchist practice aims to create anarchy on a global scale, but anarchy is also a method for our lives, our projects, and our battles here and now. But what does this mean?

Anarchists want a world where all the institutions in which power is accumulated have been destroyed and all relationships of domination have

abstraction. It would be a cause to serve, another form of domination. This is why anarchist programs are among the surest ways to undermine the practice of anarchy and transform anarchists into political activists aiming for an end, a final destination, for which each of us is simply a means.

But the only ends that it makes sense for any of us to pursue are our selves, our lives, and our relationships, and these ends are never reached once and for all. They are created constantly as the ongoing process of living. Anarchy is the negative project through which we destroy the social limits that stand in the way of this process of constant self-creation. This is not a destination, but a practice with which to experiment immediately. The anarchist insistence upon concrete freedom manifests here and now as what Stirner called "ownness"—the process of making one's life one's own against all claims

made against it. This inevitably brings us into conflict with this society and its endless series of obligations and duties, and the institutions, people, structures, and technologies through which it reinforces these obligations and duties. So the negative project of anarchy is a project of active attack against all



DeWitt Cheng

disappeared. The very negativity of this desire is what opens the doors to an apparent infinity of possibilities for creating our lives. This is why the anarchist project must be essentially negative, one of destruction. To try instead to define it as a positive project, a program, is to set boundaries and transform anarchy itself into an institution to be built. This bounded so-called anarchy would be a mere

these institutions, people, structures, and technologies.

And it is precisely the negativity of anarchy that I, as an egoist, embrace. By aiming for the destruction of all the concrete institutional frameworks that uphold the rule of real authorities and of ideological spooks, anarchy opens the way to an infinite world of possibilities from which I can create my life.

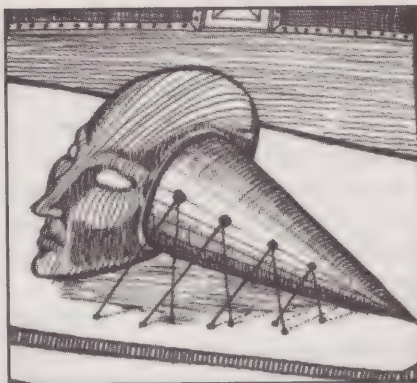


*Editor's note: We received this pseudonymously. We thought it would be a good topic for this column, which is intended as a place where anarchists in the field of health care (allopathic and otherwise) can express their experiences, especially the difficulties of negotiating an explicitly anti-authoritarian path through (mostly) authoritarian institutions. In keeping with privacy and anti-disclosure laws, the author's name and patient stories related here have been altered significantly.*

In the course of my duties as an Emergency Medical Technician-Basic (EMT-B—a fancy name for an ambulance driver and provider of first aid with oxygen) I have many occasions to encounter people who are mentally ill. Some of them are patients.

As an anarchist the last thing in the world I'd want for myself or others I care about is to be locked up. Part of my job, however, is to transport people who need psychiatric help (drugs, counseling, or both) to the locked county psychiatric emergency services hospital. These patients are often experiencing acute psychiatric problems. Some go voluntarily, but if they're not in their so-called right mind, they are put on a 72-hour mandatory hold.

When people are put on such a hold, they lose all autonomy, even though they are not under arrest and not technically in jail. Indeed most of the time, the cops (who put the majority of people on holds) are not interested in them at all. Besides physicians, cops are the only people who can determine if the person is "a danger to self or others," the criterion for holding the patient. They can write up a hold—that is, they scribble down a couple of sentences as a short narrative above the mandatory statement "danger to self" or "danger to others" at the end—and then hand the "dangerous" person over to us.



## BAD MEDICINE

### Emergency Psychiatric Treatment & the Denial of Autonomy

By Sammy B.

In addition to a friend or family member, a total stranger or a busybody can set the involuntary psychiatric machinery in motion. A woman has a fight with her boyfriend and starts walking home from the store without her shoes; she stops on a freeway overpass, sitting down to take a breather and rest her feet, and a passing motorist calls the cops because she thinks—based on what?—that the woman is going to jump into the traffic below. A twelve-year old doodles in his class notes that he wants to cut himself because his older brother just went to jail, yet again, so the teacher takes the notebook to the principal, who calls the cops because of "suicidal ideation." Being on a hold sends the patient through a bunch of bureaucratic steps. It begins with putting on pajamas and getting questioned by a charge nurse (who may or may not be having a good day, or is annoyed because it's the end of her shift and she has to do yet another intake interview). Then the patients sit around in the (often over-) crowded emergency area waiting to be

interviewed by the staff psychiatrist. An out of control or otherwise uncooperative patient may be medicated by force, usually after being put in four-point (wrist and ankle) restraints, and locked away in a side room. Once the shrink makes a determination of the symptoms according to the Diagnostic and Statistics Manual, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV)—unless the patient already has a documented psychiatric history; then the interview is very short—patients are prescribed with a treatment plan and interviewed further to gauge their potential compliance. A patient might be released as soon as the initial psychiatric interview concludes (for example because the hold was bullshit and/or because the patient has calmed down enough to answer questions appropriately), or she may have to stay the full 72 hours. If the psychiatrist or the court makes a determination that a patient is still too messed up after the initial 72 hours, another hold can be added to the first one, or that patient can even be placed on a week-long hold for further observation and treatment. Holds can be extended indefinitely.

Many people who are diagnosed with mental illness just don't have the requisite thousand and one perceptual blocks and filters that allow the rest of us (the un- or under- or not-yet-diagnosed) to navigate successfully within the dominant authoritarian reality. They are more sensitive to the unresolved dissonances that exist within modern civilization.

Often their first line of defense is self-medication, with whatever socially sanctioned mind-altering substances happen to be easily accessible; illegal drugs tend to work better for some. In my job, anyone under the influence of any of them (alcohol, marijuana, crack, heroin, etc) has to go the nearest emergency room for medical clearance rather than going



to the county psych facility (we often joke that they'd deny admission to a patient with a hangnail).

Any occupation in the AMA-based medical field presents a host of tensions for an anti-authoritarian; the pressures (informal and not) involved in usurping another person's autonomy and responsibility for her own health are immense. One of the first Authoritarian Lies is the declaration "This is for your own good." A great deal of allopathic medicine is based on this Lie, emergency medicine especially; the issues of consent and legal liability loom large in all forms of medical treatment. While there are plenty of ambiguities, there are also clear moments in allopathic medicine of authentically life-saving measures that necessitate immediate intervention and getting permission or consent from the patient (if relatives are not present) after the fact.

The metaphor of the ticking time bomb is partially applicable here, although from an anarchist perspective it remains full of problems. There are people who, suffering from some mental problem(s) that make it difficult or impossible for them to interact with others in a non-threatening manner, need to be taken somewhere else immediately in order to lessen the danger to other people. (The discussion of what constitutes an actual or potential threat to others is a different matter, as is whether or not separating them involuntarily and in unpleasant surroundings actually lessens their fear.) Often that person cannot be reasoned with, and strong, non-voluntary intervention and separation is required; this is true for any assaultive behavior, whether stemming from a mental problem or not. Only the most ridiculous pacifist would deny that physical force is clearly mandated in such a situation.

What about a person who wants to

commit suicide? What are the parameters of acceptable autonomy and self-determination? If a person wants to kill herself, who are we to decide that they can't or shouldn't? If cutting provides relief from emotional pain through the experience of physical pain, why shouldn't a cutter be able to do it? If heavy drinking or drug abuse quiets their voices, should we try to prevent it? The difficulties and challenges of psychiatry stem from some of these questions, none of which have easy, universally applicable, answers. Anarchists already know that bringing the state into the equation (through cops, judges, doctors) can never bring about a positive, liberatory, solution—except by accident. Individualized care and case by case analysis is necessary, but is something that modern AMA-sanctioned psychiatry seems unable to provide.

As sad as it is to admit and accept, we live and function within a statist context, and involuntary incarceration is a fact that we have to deal with, whether through criminalization and targeted repression or medicalization. As anarchists we choose to cope with the contradictions of civilized life and its attendant hierarchies in various ways, whether through work in the "helping professions," or with our self-organized prisoner support networks, or simply by ignoring them. Others can neither ignore them nor cope.

Bigger questions remain to be answered satisfactorily pending a revolutionary solution. We can still choose to provide support for the incarcerated and ourselves at the same time. And we can continue to try, despite the lack of clear and final resolutions, to (re-)claim our autonomy and (re-)exert our humanity.

DeWitt Cheng







## Liana Doctrines The Age Of No Opinion

I'm too much of a realist to believe in anarchism. - Anonymous Realist

Lately I have had the displeasure of engaging in philosophical discussions with a segment of our so modern population that believes that critiquing dominant ideologies is self-righteous. Some others, who even though they feel the injurious nature of our state, won't form strong judgments about it because they believe they would then be seen as a fanatic, stupid, duped, or missing the grand joke of human life...that no opinion matters because nothing we ever do will change the way the world is now.

We are a worn down population - tired out emotionally from politicians' scare tactics, lack of exercise and nutritional food, frenzied media blasts which offer consumption as an antidote for our lack of meaningful relationships, days and years of meaningless wage earning tasks, and trying to make ourselves feel okay about our lives, which is most tiring of all.

Tearing it all down philosophically is complicated. Figuring out what aspects of this culture are useful to us, harmful to us, helpful, or neither is difficult; there are no clear lines. Who is the enemy? Even as anarchists this can be unclear. The short answer is: the state, of course. But scratch beyond that thin veneer of agreement and we dissolve into factions as to what to do after the state has been abolished. Do we have worker-collective factories that maintain an approximation of our current lifestyles, or do we exchange our computers for spears and warm up our drums? Or will it be a sort of magical miscellany of loosely related communities, each of them fluid

in its structure and interacting with the environment and other groups in its own way? The arguments go round and round endlessly, and we become our own worst enemies, which seems understandable because arguing about minutiae is all we have right now. There is no revolution in sight, and no specifics in that glorious and fictitious situation to persuade us to prefer one path over another.

Here I would like to make a distinction between two types of critique. The first is personal, the second is systemic in scope. In the personal realm, in relationships and small communities, there can be a play of power where it is difficult to distinguish between dominators and submitters, the intelligent and the ignorant, the powerless and the powerful; these things are fluid and changeable since they involve the shifting of people's personalities, or the fluctuations of group knowledge and commitment, and are often contextual and therefore difficult to evaluate with certainty. Established regimes or institutions are not so liquid or difficult to discern in nature. It is very easy to distinguish the oppressiveness of large organizations, and increasingly important to do so. It can be more frustrating to make critiques on a macro scale because it is less likely we will be able to shift these goliaths directly. Regardless, it is system-wide critical assessments I am concerned with here, particularly pertaining to the state.

It is advantageous for states that they should foster populations reluctant to form energetic, articulate, and radical critiques about them. Statists have studied the psychology of their populations, reviewed their past mistakes and victories, and synthesized this information into a patriot-making propaganda machine which they have unleashed with some disturbing successes.

With the help of the media, the modern state creates nationalist yarns to inspire and distract. For example, one popular us narrative showcases how the state has (generously) allowed women, people of

color, formerly poor folks, non-christians, and people with alternative lifestyles (i.e. gay) to join the decision-making echelons. This inclusion and subsequent showcasing has persuaded some of the previously unrepresented multitudes to buy into [again with the economical metaphors? Or is it deliberate this time?] the myth that anyone can rise to the top of the money pile in the us. Not surprisingly, just as with all minor rearrangements in the face of the government, these superficial changes please enough people to weaken an opportunity to foment real change - the agenda all along.

There are large numbers of people who have swallowed this kind of nonsense, and trust in the state to manage our social relations and logistical needs, with few or no objections.

For those of the population who, despite the goodies dangled before them, object outright to this system, the promoters of the state offer a scattershot mixture of self-doubt, guilt, and intimidation.

As a first defense the state offers a simple way out for folks who don't want to think very much beyond knowing they are dissatisfied (and have no passion to do anything about their discontent anyway). Statists very nicely explain that the machinations of government and society are too complicated for mere citizens to understand. No one in the general public is so brilliant or talented that they could keep their succors (or is it suckers?), and have complete freedom without inflicting a harsh word, bruise, or tear. They offer a pat on the back for caring, and ask you to keep working and paying your taxes so they can do their jobs, too. We all have to sacrifice something, and we don't all have to know what's going on. After all, the sufferings of contemporary life are inextricably woven together with their most cherished comforts and safety. Restrictions on freedom must be accepted to maintain this security, and a certain amount of violence is necessary to protect these goodies from other people or states who murderously covet them. Statists, in the worst fatherly tone, perpetuate the impossible utopian crap that it is every good citizen's right to be comfortable, safe, and happy, and that it is their government's job to see to that, if the people will just



be good enough to keep quiet and let them do their duty.

The second line of popular defense alleges that where the state has certain deficiencies, the problems are really with the citizens not pulling their weight. They have not denied that some people don't get a fair chance because of class, gender, or race. They have not denied that there is crime, homelessness, malnutrition, illiteracy, and pollution accompanied by new diseases and ecological damage. In fact, they have admitted to many shortcomings. But instead of allowing this ownership of the failings to be used as an argument against the state, they use their limitations to garner more support; the state recognizes the problem, the state has programs that prove that they care, but they need each person help to make the changes we all want. They expound on a communal sharing of fault, in which each enlightened citizen is responsible for doing everything in their power to make life better for all. If you haven't, then you have no right to complain that the government can't fix it. For example, if you don't vote, you don't have the right to complain about any government actions. This blame approach apparently disorients and paralyzes some people in an overworked, strung-out, and guilty population. Feel dizzy yet?

This brings us to a third line of state defense: defeat stories. Parables of great movements end with easily repealed reforms and, ultimately, conformity and support for the state. They have threatened upstarts with the poverty and horror of other revolutions. They have pledged retaliation, violence, or death for uprisings. And one of our very understandable responses is to tell ourselves we don't live in revolutionary times; why should we worry ourselves with things we can't fix when we could just focus on the positive things that are happening and have a good time with our petty revenges? Sure it's a little scary, crazy making, or unfair sometimes, but haven't we enjoyed some of it, too? Aren't we free to grumble and gripe? Or slip into a sullen, dark, and immobilizing ennui? You wouldn't want to hurt anyone would

you? You aren't a terrorist are you?

Now for the double mind fuck. Are you comfortable? Are you more comfortable now than you would be watching your friends and loved ones getting pepper sprayed, their heads bashed in, imprisoned, or shot? Is having that little bit more freedom really worth the lives or limbs it would cost? Are you willing to sacrifice your loved ones? And would anything really change in the long run? I mean, isn't ultimate failure what characterizes every anarchist revolution to date?

Presumably if you are reading this you might say, "But I really DO see through it all. I really DO have passion to change something. I really, really, really want it to be different. What can I do?" And what are the answers to these vital questions?



How can anarchists compete with the safety, comfort, and ease the state offers? We can't.

There are plenty of people awake to the facts of our well-padded cells and mediocre allowances. We can relax into a self-satisfied belief that we're already doing all we can, or face alternatives which are less comfortable, less safe, and more difficult to negotiate without making matters qualitatively worse for ourselves. The aversion to discomfort is understandable; we don't want to give up how good it is for how bad they promised it will be if we cultivate a real challenge to them. We crave action, and they have cleverly offered us pseudo-dangers in the form of video games, epic movies, roller coasters, extreme sports and martial arts...or the

opportunity to watch others take these challenges on reality tv. For anarchists these can be entertaining or educational, but we want something real and lasting. Where is it? Vandalism? Petty theft? Animal liberation? Sabotage? Too many of us have been harassed, bruised, or spent time in jail not to feel acutely the personal price of such activities. Are there any safe alternatives to marching uselessly in a sanctioned path with sanctioned speakers and feeling like the cowed masses that we are? One thing I know about revolution: if it were to happen, it would be uncomfortable, scary, and dangerous...yes, even more intimidating than facing forty-plus years of wage slavery.

Not only are we discouraged and overwhelmed by the flash and scope of the state, but the courage, desire, and ability to act has been trained out of us. The ability to form the close networks needed for such actions are destroyed by nuclear families, scarcity of time and goods. We are all laboring for the future, the possibilities. A future we have nearly given up on seeing in our lifetimes. A future we argue about and discuss in detail.

Should we find all the places in our lives where we are succumbing too much to the current system, where we are feeling a little too cosseted, and destroy them all? There is an excitement, a courage and energy that comes with risking danger, even hurting ourselves in finding our limits. There is learning from the past, where we went wrong when we were so close, where we let go and where we held too tightly. There is visioning how it could be possible, with a firm view of the outcome and a variety of methods to attack the status quo how we could affect this struggle, and as they learn from our tactics we learn from theirs, and as they adapt and suppress so we adapt to evade, and strike with intelligence.

I have been preparing myself for something...parkour, soma therapy, radical study groups, herbal medicine, community building...my dying breath will be the moment I let go of the belief in large scale anarchy in my lifetime.



# Have something to say?

Write us

## More Anarchy Fewer Sheep

I am utterly honored to finally find a commune of smart people with their eyes open discussing topics such as quantum mechanics, science vs capitalism, and basically giving me an outlet where i can express myself without some sheep replying with useless facts and lies and convincing the entire board.

Good work and keep it up!

A. J.

## Ecocide, Anarchy, & "The Cosmic Seance"

Dear Anarchy,

Are UFO abducted Paleolithics responsible for spawning global state diffusion (and hence, current world ecocide) in the Levant 12,000 years ago? According to anarcho-primitivist *Anarchy* editor Lawrence Jarach (*Anarchy* #60, p. 36), the answer to this conspiratorial question for anarchists "is ultimately a distraction ... we already know who is responsible." Does Lawrence mean by this that he already knows that it is the occupants of UFOs who are responsible?

According to *The State* by "anarcho" Marxist Harold Barclay in *Anarchy* #61, pp. 49, 57, "original...pristine...autochthonous state emergence" does not have a single cause. "The state (i.e., a "hierarchy" of "domination" [e.g., religious chain of command]) is an emergent out of the interacting preparatory factors [e.g.] population, sedentarism, agriculture, complex division of labor, a redistribution system and private property." (brackets added)

Conversely, and in contradistinction to Barclay's (and most of *Anarchy*'s editors and essayists) materialist determinist, leftoid, state emergent paradigm argument, anarcho-primitivist and *Anarchy* editor/essayist John Zerzan writes in his essay "Elements of Refusal"

(1988) that hunting and gathering was significantly more efficient than farming. According to Zerzan, the "consensus question" now asked by scholars is: "why was it [i.e., farming] adopted at all?" (brackets added). Moreover, Zerzan argues, "it has been shown rather conclusively" that none of these factors (e.g., population increase, hunter-gatherers' farming knowledge, climatic change, resource depletion) were the cause of the emergence of plant and animal domestication.

a remaining idea, presented by Hahn, Isaac and others, holds that *food production began at base as a religious activity*. This hypothesis comes closest to plausibility ... Sheep and goats, the first animals to be domesticated, are known to have been widely used in religious ceremonies and to have been raised in enclosed meadows for sacrificial purposes. Before they were domesticated, moreover, sheep had no wool suitable for textile purposes. (emphasis added)

Many other domesticated plants and animals "exhibit similar backgrounds," explains Zerzan. Thus, conversely to Barclay's Marxist argument, agriculture emerged from religious chain of command (i.e., the state) and the state did not emerge from agriculture, according to Zerzan.

Dovetailing with Zerzan's thesis that original farming emerged from the state, widely acclaimed French archaeologist Jacques Cauvin in his book *The Birth of the Gods and the Origins of Agriculture*, Camb. U. Press (2000), pp. 66-71, 123 and Chap. 6, explains that the Levantian 'Eve' *Woman and the Bull* statuette (flint carved in stone, bone and antler, circa 10,000 B.C.) of *Venus of Willendorf* (from the "Paleolithic Goddess substratum" from Siberia to Europe, circa 25,000 - 10,000 B.C.) sitting on a *royal throne* flanked by 'offspring' bulls and "... human figures with their arms raised in the position of supplication," was

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... a genuinely mystical personality conceived as a supreme being and universal mother goddess crowning a religious system [e.g., "female monotheism"] ... the chronological order of these changes [e.g., the *Woman and the Bull* statuette], a ["revolutionary"] symbolic transformation [shortly] *preceding* the agricultural economy, is a stratigraphic fact ... Neither technological advancement nor ecological or demographic factors caused the world's first Neolithic Revolution in the Near East ... the [sacred] symbol [e.g., the *Woman and the Bull* statuette] was itself a power capable of generating a more tangible change: the appearance of the farming economy. (brackets and emphasis added)

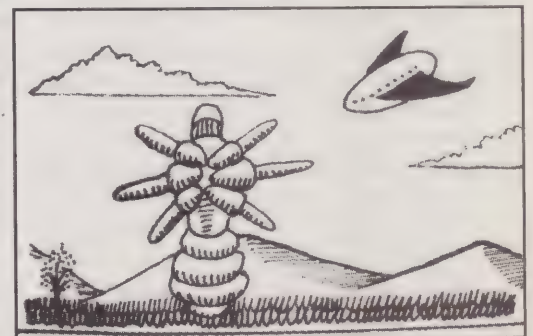
Continuing with this anarcho-primitivist ufological counter argument to Barclay's materialist determinist, scientismist, reductionist, Darwinian bio-cultural evolutionary, Marxian bourgeois, statist progress paradigm argument for state emergence; the world renowned cultural anthropologist Elman R. Service evinces:

"Chiefdoms known ethnologically seem to be typically, perhaps universally, theocracies [i.e., divinely guided "chiefly lines"]."

Hence, the primordial, pro-

genitor earthly state is: the cosmic séance of the chain of command of "materialized" spirit ancestors of the "chiefly line". According to Service, the "chiefly line":

... is usually considered the direct descendant of the ["Great Spirit in the Sky"] founder of the line and of the [clan] society as a whole now exalted in status as a major deity ... one of the most powerful of the new politically integrative ingredients [in Polynesian chiefdoms and proto-historic Egyptian tribal chiefdoms] is ideological: the hierarchy of the authority system [i.e., the monotheistic hierarchy (i.e., the chain of command) of 'materialized' spirit ancestors of the "chiefly line" of the most dominant clan of the chiefdom] has become supernaturally sanctioned in *Mythology*. The original founder [now the "Great Spirit" of the "chiefly line"] becomes an ancestor-god, other ancestors are lesser gods, the living chief is nearly divine, lesser chiefs less divine, and the supernatural world and the living world are reflections of each other ('On Earth as it is in Heaven'). (*Origins of the*





*State and Civilization*, pp. 78, 92, brackets and emphasis added)

Continuing with this anarcho-primitivist ufological argument that original state emergence (i.e., the cosmic séance of the chain of command of 'materialized' spirit ancestors of the "chiefly line") has one and only one cause (namely, UFO abduction of Paleolithics) and that the state is the original, singular, independent creator and prime mover generator of the sacred symbol, "ritual authority," division of labor, agriculture, surplus, private property, city and advancing technology; I quote several more world leading scholars, some of whom are "influential anarchists" like *Anarchy* editor Lev Chernyi (a.k.a. Jason McQuinn) as cited by David Watson in *Against the Megamachine: Essays on Empire and its Enemies*, p. 168:

"There is evidence that the concept of the sacred [e.g., ancestor *Mythology*] played a major role in the development of ... authority ..." (brackets added)

The point is that the division of labor, like the production of a surplus, requires the mediation of political power." (Stanley Diamond [mentor of John Zerzan] *In Search of the Primitive* [1974], p. 14) Alienation is political before it is economic; power precedes labor, the economic derives from the political..." (Pierre Clastres, *Society Against the State* [1987], p. 198) ... Ritual authority structures play an important part in the organization of production (i.e., division of labor) and actively further the coming of domestication ... (John Zerzan, "Runing on Emptiness," *Anarchy*, Spring-Summer, 1997, p. 34)

Lewis Mumford in *The City in History* (1961), pp. 30, 38 and *The Myth of the Machine* (1966, 67), p. 169, explains that original kingship (i.e., state and civilization) was ushered in by the "Paleolithic hunting chief" under the influence

of "distant sky gods":

That urban transformation was accompanied, perhaps preceded, by similar outpourings from the collective unconscious. At some moment ... the local familiar gods, close to the hearth fire, were out powered and partially replaced, certainly out ranked, by the *distant sky gods*. *The local chieftain* [i.e., a hunter chieftain who held a permanent stronghold] turned into the towering king, and became likewise the chief priestly guardian of the shrine, now endowed with divine or almost divine attributes ... the ancient King List of Sumer records that kingship 'was lowered down from heaven' ... The king became a mediator between heaven and earth ... The historic effort, as recorded on two famous Egyptian palettes, begins at the point where the *Paleolithic hunting chief* ... passes over into the powerful king, who takes to his own person all the powers and prerogatives of the community." (brackets and emphasis added)

In her book *The First Cities*, Dora Jane Hamblin describes how the gods, who were members of the same family and were "organized into a chain of command that had its own lords and kings," completely dominated Sumerian city life. Thus, the newly exalted chieftain of the "chiefly line" became the representative of this divine chain of command. The state, at least in the minds of the citizens and slaves of antiquity, was extraterrestrial in origin. According to Hamblin, the Sumerian city temples (which earlier may have been Neolithic shrine [i.e., house of divinity] redistribution centers), where "initial enforcements of division of labor took place," were manufacturing centers composed of many crafts and trades whose preeminent function was the production of luxury goods for the gods.

There exists a significant probability that "The smartest guys in the room" oxymoron Oakland As-

sociation of Autonomous ["anarchist"] Astronauts (OAAA), are the same time dilated/"Wobbly"/worm hole/warp drive/super string tensor theorist/pin head "aliens amongst us" who brought the state to earth in the first place 12,000 years ago in the Levant!! Now OAAA want to continue their endless, monotonous diffusion of space-ship/farming/state/city/advancing technics/ecocide/spaceship paradigm through out the holographic universe by entering the pristine ranges and purviews of solar and extra-solar prehistoric Homo sapiens and *Anarchy* is expediting their "Wobbly" statist project by authenticating their "anarchism" in the anarchist mise-en-scene by giving them a privileged "influential anarchist" forum in the Columns section of *Anarchy* #'s 61, 62, pp. 66, 64, respectively. Simultaneously, *Anarchy* has maligned anarcho-primitivist ufologists with vicious insults and name calling and suppressing their novel ideas by prohibiting them from writing in the Column section of *Anarchy*. (See Jason McQuinn's *malicious responses* "No Thanks for the Extraterrestrial Offer" and "No Outside Agencies Needed to Explain History" to anarcho-primitivist ufologist Montezuma's (a.k.a. David G. Pearson's) "Extraterrestrials Really Did Initiate the State" and "The Aliens Did It" letters to *Anarchy* #'s 50, 52, pp. 68, 79, respectively, and offers to submit "Primitivist Praxis" and "The Stronghold and the Shrine Revisited" for publication in *Anarchy*).

In your Oakland AAA Column in *Anarchy* #61, p. 66 (which Jason McQuinn authorized for publication), the OAAA authors (in their CIA quote) indicate that it is completely reasonable for anarchists to seriously investigate, theorize and write about the UFO (Unidentified Flying Object) phenomenon. However, Jason, contradictorily and hypocritically, authorized this UFO article in the Column section of *Anarchy* after calling me names such as "UFO-crank," "crackpot," "fanatic," "unbalanced mind,"

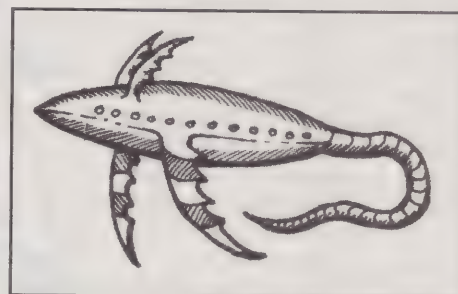
"unbalanced life," "extreme social alienation," "ridiculous," "unreliable," "untrustworthy" and "absurd" because I investigated, theorized and wrote about the UFO phenomenon from an anarcho-primitivist perspective!!?? (See the references to Jason's responses to my letters listed above)

Sincerely,  
D. P.  
Arlington, MA

## Changing Sides?

Sir/Madam:

When I was a young fellow, starting school in Vancouver, Canada I was shown how to recognize warplanes, you know Jap Zeros and Vals, German Heinkles and Messerschmidts, US fighters and bombers. I was also shown how to recognize various boats from the Worlds Navies, real neat information for a six year old.



My Dad was a Air Raid Warden, also in Vancouver, he would run around at night making sure there were no lights on in the neighborhood, I think all this accomplished is that we got a bit more rationed gas and tires for our 37 Plymouth. My brother was overseas, and was wounded several times, real traumatic for my Mother when the Black Bordered Telegrams came.

Over the years I sort of kept track of different things that might harm our society, you know from watching the old shows, where the white lightning makers would dump oil on the roadway to cause the revenueurs chase vehicle to go in the ditch (Robert Mitchum, Thunder Road) lots of this stuff in the old days.

Then came TV where the likes



of Quincy would discover that the corpses in a cabin were asphyxiated, and this cause because some bad guy covered the chimney flue when the fireplace was going.

Over the years learned lots of neat stuff, and ended up putting a manuscript together called Smittys Revolt, a sort of spoof on a local revolution, by a bunch of disgusted neighbors.

The only one interested in this was John Williams, and of course the Cdn Govt., there the ones that tap phones, monitor mail and so on, not really listen to what one is saying, I guess they know better.

I stepped outside the box with what I had learned over the years, and discovered this society is as vulnerable as hell to mayhem, sabotage and to on. I believe the firebomb and demonstrations are a little old fashioned.

I asked our Govt. you know the mounties CSIS, intergrated security, and the US Govt if they would be interested in my thoughts, so I am back to square one, they sort of say give us your info and we will get back to you, return my letters(snail mail) and say no one at address, of course the letters have been opened, my mail monitored again, I suppose everything one does is watched nowadays. I even thought someone would give me a job or some bucks for my views, but in Canada, everything must be like the Air India disaster, all talk, no action and no listening.

I think it is now time to change sides, perhaps the Anarchists, demonstrators, and so on need what I have.

Any Suggestions, if any one wants to talk, please send a number by Email

Thanks for reading this,  
R. G.

## Kicking Bookchin When He's Down

Note my following objection to the democratic rule-maker Murray Bookchin, which I offer in response to those who think my notion of a democracy that evolves toward an-

archy makes me a democratic statist or crypto-authoritarian.

Left to his or her own self, the individual loses the indispensable social moorings that make for what an anarchist might be expected to prize in individuality: reflective powers, which derive in great part from discourse; the emotional equipment that nourishes rage against unfreedom; the sociality that motivates the desire for radical change; and the sense of responsibility that engenders social action.

If individual 'autonomy' overrides any commitment to a 'collectivity,' there is no basis whatever for social institutionalization, decision-making, or even administrative coordination. Each individual, self-contained in his or her 'autonomy,' is free to



do whatever he or she wants -- presumably, following the old liberal formula, if it does not impede the 'autonomy' of others. Even democratic decision-making is jettisoned as authoritarian: 'Democratic rule is still rule'.... But the fact remains that a free society will either be democratic, or it will not be achieved at all.

Murray Bookchin

In reading the above, I was struck -- in the first sentence -- by the strong sense that Bookchin does not trust the autonomous individual, and considers the unsocialized individual implicitly (if not inherently) /\*anti\*/-social. Perhaps in his dogmatic rationalist "anti-spiritualism,"

he overlooks or rejects the traditional Buddhist notion (ultimately at the heart of all spiritual traditions) that there's a difference between the Self and the ego -- and that the Self achieves its fulfillment only in its realization as compassion.

What distinguishes this view from Bookchin's view is the insight that compassion itself comes from within.

Mitchell Halberstadt  
Oakland, CA

## A Lot to Learn

Editor:

Recently while traveling, I picked up a copy of AJODA at a Borders Bookstore. I enjoyed much of it, but some of you guys need to learn proper English usage in writing. But that's not my reason for writing.

As a Libertarian (and a Christian), I am pretty much ignorant of Anarchy, other than what I've read in history books, which of course are biased or deliberately false. After perusing your zine, I have a couple of questions and an observation.

First, are Anarchists allowed to have a sense of humor, or are you all in a continuous and unabated state of deep rage? Do you laugh? Do you cry? Do you tell jokes?

Second, while I don't question the sincerity of your positions, deep down, do you really believe the world would be better if molded to your theories of reality? It's easy to hold a "radical" position if one is confident it will never come to pass.

Finally, an observation: Should your vision for society, with its extermination of capitalism, ever become reality, the consequential catastrophic destruction would include your own.

Sincerely,

I.W.  
New Holland, PA

## Primitivism versus Mass Society

AJODA,

This letter is in response to "An Anarchist FAQ"'s section A.3.9, or "What is Anarcho-Primitivism?" The author of this section does a disservice to anarchists in general by repeating false dichotomies in an effort to discredit anarchist primitivists and other anti-authoritarian critics of civilization. This FAQ in virtually every other section aims towards exposing anarchist ideas, rather than focusing on their perceived flaws, but they decidedly took a page from Brian Caplan's Anarchist FAQ, bordering on hypocrisy.

The main weight of "What is Anarcho-Primitivism?" stems from "A Primitivist Primer" by John Moore that condenses his view on anarchist primitivism as an introduction to those new to its thought. In this primer Moore attempts to answer some basic questions about anarchist primitivism. He disregards "the weird fantasies spread by some commentators" who suggest that population levels needed to achieve a primitive society would require "mass die-offs" or "Nazi-style death camps", but he leaves the reader unsatisfied with his answer, by simply rattling off a commitment to anarchist principles.

"An Anarchist FAQ" catches this vagueness and exploits it, exaggerating its position into a mass model. "For them, a return to the wild, to a hunter-gatherer mode of life, is the only way for anarchy to exist". Because there is no attempt in this small primer to find a way to relate primitivism to other anarchists and their praxis they could be responsible for the deaths of billions.

Using Ken Knabb's "The Poverty of Primitivism" "An Anarchist FAQ" perpetuates this outrageous strawman, but does so with a generous amount of fallacy by concluding with two options: mass die off or a "transition" period. If this wasn't bad enough, the author misrepresents the arguments concerning collapse, "Sadly, option



one, namely an almost overnight transformation, is what appears to be implied by most primitivist writers". The pessimistic views coming from anarchist primitivist thinkers are largely concerned with the state of current affairs in society and the precarity of civilized life. They are not about applying "an extremely speedy process" on the world.

Relating our current ways of life with the lives of primitives could answer the population myth, the six billion individual question. Anarchist thinkers often stress how they'd like to transform society but they fail to express it in a way that challenges its mass, their views on praxis in relation to it and how this entire vision can possibly work together with other anarchists even in some of the most stable outcomes.

Insurgent ruptures can capture blocks or seize cities if but for moments while democratic institutions build towards a counter power. Direct action strikes against top-down sovereignty expressing anti-authoritarian power and despite flaws, they offer the bulk of resistance practiced by anarchists. The anarchist proponents of these methods sometimes challenge the ideas of mass society but fail by not taking the ways of the hunting primitive seriously or explain how those that want to return to the land as hunting gatherers correspond with a greater urban society. These thinkers fail to see primitivist thought as anything other than ideology.

"Against Mass Society" says it is the "priority" of agriculture that is the problem, not agriculture itself. The pitfalls of agriculture express sovereignty over the land. By viewing "sustainability" as only maintaining our population size and comfort does not create sustainability with the land. We can adapt by expanding our knowledge of other ways in search of an equilibrium with the land, be it hunting, gathering, horticulture or creating permaculture. As urban dwellers, we can take other ways of life seriously and desire more than a continuation of mass society.

High Priest Wombat, KSC

## Issue 63 Served With a Side of Bacon

Dear Masters Without Slaves,

To quote Ward "of the State" Churchill [*AJODA* Spring-Summer 1998]: "Opening a copy of Anarchy has become an increasingly bizarre experience." May it ever be so! And if I may quote Wolfi Landstreicher's hero, Giordano Bruno: "I am of the frame of mind concerning correction, that in its exercise, we are like unto Gods." Or as the Hulk would say, it's clobberin' time!

There should be a statute on limitations on letters of reply-critics. Like Iain "Dolly II" McKay, Mitchell Halberstadt hoped to retrieve his credibility by waiting so long that everybody forgot what he said in the first place. He need not have waited so long. By now he's forgotten most of it himself. He still expects anarchy to evolve out of Robert's Rules of Order, courtroom procedures, and the democratic state – but he still can't think of any reasons why. His call for "inclusion" is really just complaining that he doesn't get invited to parties. There might be reasons for that.

On to the Circus of Dr. Lao. He cries racism, but for him the color question is the color of money. He wants a piece of the

midwives, not acupuncturists and amulet-peddlers. Dr. Lao discerns "a pervasive but subtle issue which underlies much of TAM practitioners' struggle for appropriate scope of practice and reimbursement by insurers." There's nothing subtle about envy and greed. Dr. Lao is not inscrutable.

For somebody who claims to be "beyond words," Wolfi uses a lot of them. For all his egoist grandstanding, he's just a New Age know-nothing. He has never read Bruno, whom he insults by admiring, or Francis Bacon, whom he dignifies by defaming. I have read both. Bruno knew Wolfi's type: "Ignorance and arrogance are two discrete sisters united in body and soul." Contrary to Wolfi, it was Bruno who may have played a small part in inspiring modern science (Frances Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, p. 448) whereas "Bacon's former position as Father of Experimental Science" is now weakened" (p. 450).

Wolfi relates science to religion, to discredit it, but Bruno was a monk. Bacon was a lawyer. He was not an experimental scientist or any kind of scientist. His only scientific experiment ended in tragedy. In a premature attempt to invent frozen food, he stuffed a chicken with snow. Bacon caught a chill and died. His private secretary, Thomas Hobbes, had to find other employment. Bruno and Bacon were equally innocent of mathematics, which Wolfi correctly identifies as fundamental to modern science. Bruno espoused Copernican theory, Bacon did not; although, as their contemporary John Dunne worried, it "may very well be true."

In his zeal to politicize, polemicize, and self-publicize, Wolfi recklessly defames Francis Bacon based on nothing but poorly remembered clichés from out of date textbooks on the history of ideas. He says that Bacon "had no problem with reporting people like Giordano Bruno, who expressed 'heretical' ideas, to the church authorities." Bacon

never did so. Wolfi is so ignorant of history as to be unaware of the difference between Catholic and Protestant countries. Bacon never reported any heretics to "church authorities" (or to the state) – in Tudor and Stuart England, there were no church authorities with jurisdiction over heresy. Bruno was reported to the Inquisition in Venice, not by Bacon, but by a local bookseller.

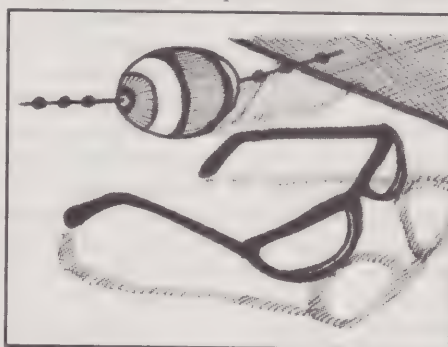
Bacon sought through science (which he scarcely understood), not to rape nature and the oppressed masses, as Wolfi brazenly asserts, or to promote capitalism, which Bacon never noticed, but rather to effect a "marriage" of Mind and the Universe, from which "may spring helps to man, and a line and race of inventions that may be in degree subdue and overcome the necessities and miseries of humanity," "to overcome the immeasurable helplessness and poverty of the human race." Four hundred years later, it's easy to see the unforeseeable limitations and the bad consequences of this world-view, but if that's all you see, then you're just another snotty little self-important shit like "Wolfi Landstreicher," or whatever he's calling himself this week.

Bob Black  
Abobob51@peoplepc.com

## Getting Shit Done in the Philippines

Hi everyone!

Good day! I am Alter from Davao City Philippines. I used to be a member of the AS-A-WHOLE collective and we used to have an infoshop. Right now we've decided to split the collective into two so that we can come up with more ideas and projects. So now I'm planning to run another infoshop. I have several books here in my old place about different topics of culture, socio-politics, science, history and art etc. but unfortunately, it's not enough to establish a good infoshop (I don't have enough books, zines, pamphlets or records because this is my first time to run one). I have also collected few documentary films in which we used to show during our previous film



"trillions [sic] of medical dollars" which mainly go to the science-based allopathic MDs rather than Oriental magicians. He should know, as he is one of them, that many North American physicians are Asians. Historically the MD monopoly had something to do with sexism, but nothing to do with racism. It targeted abortionists and



viewing activities back on our infoshop. Those films are of various subjects but unfortunately its really not enough. I am taking good care of these stuffs because i know this is very important in my future projects. I have my little space here in my grandmother's house and i think this could cater libraries, audio visual and even meetings and forums.

If you like to ask me about my projects, i'll say i have so many plans in my mind. I would like to establish a permanent 'book club' which will hold a regular weekly discussions about politics, alternative living and ecological issues. Right now, i am also planning to find members from different schools so that we can easily attach to different kinds of school organizations and organize events and discussions inside the school. As a post-graduate of 4 year course, i've also attended different organizations before in my school and did some collaborative efforts with some cultural and ecological groups. In this way, we can reach further in spreading the alternative ideas and radical solutions to different social and environmental problems. For 2 years, Ive been organizing with different types of youth organizations and NGOs. Through art and lectures, i deliver ideas about sweatshops labor, corporate destruction, monocropping agriculture, pesticides, human rights, social responsibilities and consumer awareness. I am doing these environmental campaigns voluntarily ever since to many communities and schools. These monocropping types of agriculture has done a lot of harm to our ecology here in davao city. Not to mention their pesticides and deforestations. Currently, we are still pushing to the total banning of 'Aerial Spraying' method used by Big banana and pineapple industries here in Mindanao. These plantations has done a lot of damage to both ecology and the people but still, the government do not give sincere actions to this so i really think the time now to act is in our hands! [...]

Organizing with different

NGOs is one of my functions in my previous collective. Despite of all the hard times, i managed to do several field works. Currently, im still working for my second issue of my booklet called 'intellectual revolution', a compilation of poetry, essay, short stories and artworks from different local individuals i know. In this way, i am helping them publish their writings and motivate them to do more DIY Alternative efforts. unfortunately, i am having a difficulty in producing huge numbers of copies because i



have no subsidy for this. I can only afford to make ten copies per week so i think i should include this as a proposal. I am seriously looking for somebody or any organizations who can afford to help me in any possible way to reproduce my booklet because I can't afford to have a photo copy machine.

This coming June, I would also like to continue my saturday 'free school and art workshop' project for children ages 4 to 12. We are doing this program (with my previous collective) every last saturday of the month but this time, i would like to make it 2 times a month. This of course is a very meaningful effort to offer for our innocent children living in a very self-centered adult society. This 'alternative do-it-yourself effort' for fragile vulnerable young minds is sincerely to be given for free! The activity would include writing and art workshop, ecological class for children (of course), film viewings, healthy vegetarian foods, parlor games, poetry and short story reading, singing and dancing and gift giving (my few donated childrens book and art equipments). unfortunately, this project wouldn't be possible if i cannot collect donations for my

students. Please, do not forget to include some school supplies such as childrens book, art tools, sketch pad etc. etc. on your donation list.

Anyway, i think this is all for now and before i end this letter, i would like to clarify my proposals for any kind hearted comrades across the globe... i am asking for any donations to help me materialize this infoshop project. If you can afford to send me any donations such as books, pamphlets, zines, films, records, leaflets and stickers, please dont hesitate to send me through my personal address. I am also looking for any of these important electronic gadgets like cheap printers, DVD burners, cheap digital camera for my documentations and reports or even used 'laptop' if possible. If you are interested in helping me in my projects, please feel free to email me so that i can give you more informations with regards to the process. You can also contact me and set some time for us to talk online and give some few questions about my credibility and ideas. For those who like to expand their projects (any) here in the Philippines, I am willing to accept any specific tasks from you (if you would prefer it that way) or just simply discuss a certain project and plan to you and help me work things out. I hope everythings clear about this point of self promotion because as you know here in this 3rd world disregarded country, finding a good, noble, meaningful and politically correct job is impossible. I am a graduate of computer science but i prefer not to take corporate jobs because i've already dedicated my life in this struggle! I would rather use my skills, abilities, talents and intellect to meaningful resistance such this than to be a slave and be a passive victim of corporate oppression which inflicted so much hardship and pain to humanity and to earth in general.

That's all i can say right now and i am hoping for your positive response on this matter... Sincerely,

Mr. Alter Picar  
#87 Km7 San Nicolas, Buhangin,  
Davao City, Philippines 8000  
alarconey@yahoo.com

## And Now for a Poem...

disproduction.org/hc

enemies

And you will write your name  
in blood on the courthouses wall  
and it will not stop the war

your son will come home with  
his skin burned off and  
his pain will become your religion

your home will become the church  
where priests go to die

we are not all this fortunate

J.S.

Baltimore, MD

## 48 Laws We Didn't Print

Editors,

Hello to you. Enclosed with this letter is a submission to your wonderfully titled magazine. May 2007 will mark a little over 21 years of living by core Anarchist beliefs. These beliefs have led me to figurative hell and back again then back to hell all over. I wouldn't trade it for any other life.

My adolescent years were full of no rules "fuck authority" sort of chaos-anarchy. I ignorantly accepted this uneducated version for some time. However, through the years I have realized that anarchy must bow to the one true set of laws. This would be the laws of nature, not the laws of Man which are ripe with selfish agendas. After 21+ years of living, reading, comparing, etc. I have grown into a more militant anarchist with seemingly "radical" ideas that are guided by simple truths. The enclosed submission is based on these truths. I FULLY REALIZE that portions of my submission will offend, anger, or bring negative reactions from portions of your readers. I say, "True, but this will only inspire them to think, question, search, and commit themselves more deeply." Therefore, such reactions shouldn't be viewed as "bad." Besides, there



is no "good" or "bad" according to the natural laws. What is "good" for the lion is bad for the gazelle, and vice versa—such concepts are human generated myths based on an agenda to assign moral values which only serve to cloud the truth.

Anyway, I hope my "stronger" points contained within the following pages will not cause you to "censor" my ideas through exclusion. I the event you choose to publish "48 Laws of Living Anarchy", please mail a copy of the relevant issue to me.  
Thank you,

Druid (MM)

P.S. Would you have an interest in articles on DMT, Tryptamines, Ayahuasca, etc. Serious articles.

#### Lawrence responds:

*The submission referred to was a series of 48 "indisputable truths" that the author presents as some kind of Natural Law. In fact most are the usual Western philosophical assumptions cloaked in the language of objectivity; the constructs and conceits of Enlightenment Universalism are unappealing, whether coming from 18th century Liberals or 21st century incarcerated right-wing anarchists. Among the natural laws proffered by our intrepid philosopher are "Nature is all that one must look to in order to understand life's divine [sic] plan"; "Is an animal's life worth defending more so than that of a defenseless and innocent human fetus who's [sic] only crime was to form in the womb of a parent too irresponsible to take the precautions necessary to avoid an unwanted pregnancy?"; "The purpose of sexual relations is the propagation of a specie [sic]"; "Homosexuality not only contradicts, but also defies, every natural law" and so on. Needless to say, this journal will not be printing such a string of incoherent and self-important nonsense. This decision can hardly be called censorship; the editors of this journal are under no obligation to print every submission that comes to us, especially the meanderings of a self-evidently reactionary writer. This decision is called offhanded dismissal.*

### Political Prisoner Requests Help

Dear CAL Press:

It's good to know you're out there. With so much needed to be done and so little to do it with—I appreciate You all for being on one of the front lines.

I'm of the will and the mindset to do more. Unfortunately, I'm caged. I'm the man who was videotaped shooting up the White House. "The good or ill of man lies within his own will"—Epictetus

I need some help with the following: First—I'm looking for a few new friends to write to. To share ideas and to explore avenues to see of real change is at all possible.

I'm an Atheistic Anarchist. So nothing is taboo. Blow me away. :)

Second—I need information: Any Global News of current events happening to bring about change. Stuff that is not being reported.

The Key is pure Self-Reliance.

There is a device that sucks the energy from regular electrical transformers. No bleeding involved. It collects any "Waste Energy" that's leaking from most transformers. I would like info on that and stuff such as that and so much more. Anything and every subjects.

Third—I need a friend to help me put me on My Space, and help me with the whole process.

Thanks to everyone involved. I look forward to every issue. Keep in mind: Original actions are what heroes are made of. :)

Stay Strong! A

Francisco M. Duran  
#19588-016  
U.S. Penitentiary  
PO Box 7000  
Florence CO 81226

## ANNOUNCING Little black cart

### Who Was the First Person to Use "Affinity Group"?

i was the first to use the term affinity group.

it was during a conversation with murray bookchin re:Spain. and my family UAW/m.f. was the first to use it publicly. i also coined the term "Armed Love" to differentiate us from the generic (hippy or political movements of the 60's). i am only now becoming computer literate. so the late contact. keep going.

ben morea  
new.mask@hotmail.com

### Caveman Wants Books by "Idiot"

Dear brothers in scholastic recititude:

Please ask your readers to donate their old copies of books by Bob Black to the Lucy Parsons Center, 549 Columbus Ave, Boston, 2118. That way the youth of Boston can decide for themselves what a blithering idiot he is.  
Thanks a heap,

Barney Rubble  
Bedrock, a place right out of history

Contrary to the prevailing wind, some friends of AJODA are launching Little Black Cart, a new way to get hard-to-find anarchist material.

Starting with a pile of boxes and a web site, LBC provides access (for non-anarchists and anarchists alike) to exciting, mostly-anarchist material.

Little Black Cart is an easier way for people who might not be In The Know to find anarchist and anti-authoritarian publishers and lists material that is at least exciting and interesting, and frequently hard to find.

Although independent publishing is in serious disarray, this is not because people love books any less, or because books are no longer a wonderful way to learn about the world, but because independent publishers have not figured out the best ways to use the internet. Little Black Cart is an attempt to change this, by being easy to use and by providing a depth of content: the site has both simple explanations of tendencies and groups (like insurrectionary anarchism and Situationists) and links (both internal and external) to more thorough and in-depth explanations.

Little Black Cart will also learn from the weaknesses of other attempts to provide this material by being as transparent about its process and decision-making as possible.

Visit the site at  
<http://littleblackcart.com>



# HOW CAPITALISTIC ARE YOU?

Check all that apply or write in your own answers.  
Copy the questionnaire and mail it back to us at:

C.A.L. Press - Questionnaire  
PO Box 3448  
Berkeley, CA 94703

Keep a copy of your responses to find out how you measure up. Rating scale and responses for this questionnaire will be published in the next issue.

Or fill out the questionnaire on line at:  
<http://www.anarchymag.org>

Do you invest in stocks or bonds?

- ☐ huh?                      ☐ my grandma bought me a bond once  
☐ only in green corporations      ☐ I have a diverse portfolio

Do you steal to undermine the economy?

- ☐ as often as I eat                      ☐ I steal for fun  
☐ only if my boss isn't there      ☐ that would be wrong

Do you own your own business?

- ☐ no                      ☐ I'm off the books self employed  
☐ only cooperatively      ☐ yes, but my employees like me

How many times have you been a landlord?

- ☐ you're joking, right?  
☐ does subletting for more than my rent count?  
☐ I prefer to call myself a *property manager*

Money is best used for:

- ☐ starting a fire      ☐ providing for my basic needs  
☐ supporting radical projects      ☐ investing in future security

When I have lots of money in my bank I feel:

- ☐ never had a bank account      ☐ I've never had extra  
☐ secure in meeting my needs      ☐ free and powerful

The worst aspect of capitalism is:

- ☐ social isolation      ☐ consumerism and ecocide  
☐ wage slavery      ☐ I guess it isn't fair to minorities

The best aspect of capitalism is:

- ☐ fuck you                      ☐ it's something to dismantle  
☐ fuels radical discourse      ☐ I get every *thing* I want

When faced with a financially needy comrade I:

- ☐ panhandle with them      ☐ ask what they need  
☐ give them spare change      ☐ pretend I'm broke

How often do you enjoy spending money?

- ☐ why not ask how often I enjoy starving children?  
☐ I can't say I've ever *enjoyed* it  
☐ as often as I spend money on righteous causes  
☐ shopping is the highlight of my week

## Scoring For Last Issue:

### "How Oppositional Are You?"

Bubbles are numbered from the left to the right and from the top to the bottom. For all questions give yourself 1 point for choosing the first bubble, 2 for bubble two, 3 for bubble three, or 4 points for bubble four. If you answered more than one bubble in a question, give yourself the average value of the two answers.

Add all your points together for the survey.

If you wrote in your own answers subtract 1 point for each extra answer; you are happily not confined by our definitions. Use the chart below to learn about yourself.



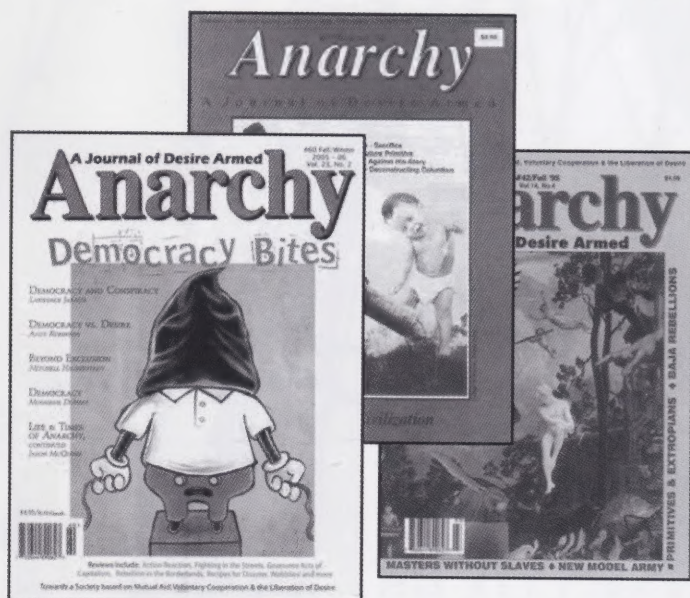
John Henri

Total Points	How Oppositional Are You?
0-11	You must have stolen this magazine; we hope you enjoyed it before you used it to start a fire.
12-22	Sneaky and fiesty, an admirable combination for any self-respecting anarchist.
23-33	Discover new possibilities by breaking rules more often; <i>safety is an illusion</i> .
34 +	You have been effectively assimilated by this culture...



# SUBSCRIBE

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We publish a journal of desire armed; uncompromisingly anti-authoritarian, *Anarchy* refuses all ideology. We criticize all religion, all moralism, all political ideology. We have no patience for nationalism, militarism, racism, and hierarchy. We don't want to leave anything out. Nothing is sacred, least of all anarchism.

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